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A PERSONAL-RELATIONAL MODEL OF
" FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION
IN THE PHILIPPINE PROTESTANT CHURCH

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Faculty of the School of Theology
at Claremont, California

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Religion

by
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CHAPTER I

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

Family life education came to the forefront in the work of Protestant churches in the Philippines after World War II. This emphasis came because of many families bearing the ravages of war and the changing social scene. With urbanization and a rising middle class, patterns of inter-familial and generational relationships started shifting. The younger people left the extended family living in the small towns and villages and went to the cities where the conjugal family was of primary concern. Rising expectations and the desire for consumer goods and private property came along with this trend. The personalistic worldview or the concept that the universe is controlled by personal beings and that material blessings are a sign of favor from these beings started giving way to the mechanistic worldview or the idea that the universe and its interrelationships can be understood and manipulated to give man direct control.¹ Oftentimes the shift was

¹A full discussion of the personalistic and mechanistic worldviews in relation to the Philippines is found in Frank Lynch, S. J., "Lowland Philippine Values," *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Baguie Religious Acculturation Conference, December 29-31, 1960* (Manila: 1961), pp. 100-120.

difficult and sudden for all concerned. The time-honored patterns of thinking and the tradition-bound social customs were very much apparent but the "New Filipino"² could not quite accept it and yet he was hesitant to move ahead. He still is.

I. THE PROBLEM

Observation and evaluation of family life education through the National Council of Christian Churches in the Philippines have shown that the Protestant Church has to rethink the foundations and methods of family life education used in the local churches. This writer suggests that the emphasis be on the ongoing tasks and the problems of human growth and interpersonal relationships within and beyond the confines of the family, building upon Christian and cultural heritage and on changes and directions that are taking place.

Today's Filipino is caught in confusion and conflict over personal identity versus family or group loyalty. He wants to be in charge of himself and yet be validated by significant others. He desires to work toward his ideals but he also wants to give way to familial and group ties

²A term currently used by cultural anthropologists and sociologists at the Philippine Cultural Center. Ateneo de Manila, Manila, Philippines.

that demand priority. How is he going to reconcile his own hopes and objectives to the plans and purposes of his family and primary society? How can he maintain individual integrity as well as social solidarity?

The contemporary Filipino is also confronted with the problem of wholeness: of spiritual meaning, psychological wellbeing and social equilibrium in the midst of population explosion and poverty. There are over 34 million Filipines to a land area of 115,000 square miles and by the year 2000 there will be an estimated population of 120 million if the present population rate of 4 per cent continues. Over a million babies are born in the Philippines every year and out of 86 babies born in the world every minute, three come from the Philippines. Of the 29.7 million hectares of Philippine land only 37.7 per cent is cultivated. Two million out of the 17 million potential workers are unemployed. The per capita national income is 140 dollars per year and one-fourth of the nation's wealth goes to 4 per cent of the population.³ It will take public investment and private initiative to

³The above data are from Mercedes B. Conception, "Population Growth and the Philippine Economy," *Church and Community* IV (November-December 1964), 9-13; and Jacob S. Quiambae, "Toward Leadership, Family Planning," *Church and Community*, VII (November-December 1967), 19.

bring about better standards of health and living. The church and other institutions have to combine forces and marshall resources to provide wholeness for every man and the entire nation.

These problems cannot be solved by focusing on the individual apart from his basic social unit, the family. As of now, his family sets his life-style and molds the basic patterns of his intrapsychic and interpersonal growth. Family constellations and roles have their long-established histories that are difficult to change. Yet change is taking place and families are the matrix wherein changes for good or ill can take place.

II. SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This dissertation proposes a personal-relational model of family life education and explores the theological, psychological, cultural and practical aspects of personal-relational living. The personal focus refers to the intrapsychic qualities and capabilities of every individual and the recognition of his worth before God and fellow-men. Every person has basic needs to be met as well as developmental tasks to be performed. He cannot achieve this alone and yet his self-understanding enables him to esteem or love himself inspite of the inner conflicts and ambivalent feelings he experiences. He knows that these

are forces he must resolve and that other human beings also face the same struggle. He recognizes his givenness, seeks to re-arrange these factors and takes a leap into new modes of existence. He realizes that he has been given the freedom over his inner dimensions and can contribute to something greater than he is.

The relational focus refers to the self's necessity and capacity to enter into relationships with God and with people in community. Relationship with God means that Being Itself or God as Personal Being confronts us as human beings, as persons. This relationship is manifested in interaction with fellow-man. To be personal being is to relate with other personal beings. To actualize the personal is to experience the relational, two foci of selfhood that could throw a person into anxiety and alienation or could bring him wholeness of essence and existence. It means entering into dialogue with other selves, experiencing them from within, encountering each other's identity, participating in God's creation and redemption and being open to change and renewal.

One purpose of this paper is to contribute toward the "New Filipino" and his understanding of intra-personal interpersonal relationships. In a culture where individual considerations come second to family and group autonomy, there is need for building self-esteem and love that is

based upon the recognition of one's uniqueness and the potential for responsible fulfillment that is open to every man. However, no one can actualize himself without his involvement with others. The intrapsychic processes can only happen if supported by social interaction. Difficulties within the self are difficulties in interpersonal relations. The self-system develops from the creative tension between the personal and relational foci of selfhood.

A second purpose is to support the importance of the family in the nurture of the individual toward self-understanding and for the development of persons able to live responsibly in society and to establish meaningful relationships. The Filipino family is in transition from the traditional social structures to a more secular-oriented value system. Unless the family begins to establish relevant tasks and goals in nurturing individual members, anomie and meaninglessness will set in. Transitions are most difficult in that one is caught between two fires as it were. One needs the inner integrity, social equanimity and the abiding faith which comes from having been confronted with the realities of living in the past as well as the present and with openness to the future.

The family faces the challenge of nurturing its

members from infancy and through the significant stages of one's life-span. The family has the individual during the early stages of life, years which are considered most crucial in the development of selfhood. The family organism is the agent that enables the individual to cope or rise above the demands and expectations of society. If the family reneges this responsibility, the individual's chances for wholeness are diminished and the family becomes dysfunctional.

A third purpose of this paper is to make suggestions regarding family life education in the work and witness of the local church. This writer acknowledges the tremendous work in Family Life Education that is going on in the Philippine Protestant Church. Instead of reiterating what is being done she has chosen to take two approaches which still need to be explored: small groups engaged in family life education in the local church and family group therapy and counseling. These are either long-range or short-range small groups that meet because of felt concerns and because in sharing with others in the redemptive community they find growth and healing.

There are sub-areas in Family Life Education which are not covered in this paper although the writer is aware that they come within the scope of this discipline. Sex Education and Family Planning are two such units. These

are only alluded to in all the chapters but are of immediate importance in the Philippine context. Researches in population control are being conducted in the Philippines and their findings will be grist-for-the-mill for model-builders. This paper limits itself to the personal-relational concepts in family life education.

III. OTHER STUDIES IN THIS AREA

The following journals and books written in the Philippines have found wide acceptance in the academic and religious disciplines which deal with family life:

Jacob Quiambae, *The Asian Family In A Changing Society* (Manila: East Asia Christian Conference, 1965). This paperback is published by the East Asia Christian Conference to give broader perspectives on "The Traditional Family in Asia" (Chapter I); "The Asian Family Amid Social Change: (Chapter II); and "The Witness of the Christian Family" (Chapter III). Quiambae also wrote *Manual on Marriage Counseling for Filipinos* (Manila: R. P. Garcia Press, 1962). This booklet is helpful in couple counseling and in understanding certain marital customs and ways.

William F. and Corinne Nydegger, *Tarong: An Ilocos Barrio in the Philippines*, Six Culture Series, Volume VI (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966). This book is part of six monographs by social scientists from Cornell,

Harvard and Yale Universities aimed at exploring patterns of child-rearing and its effect on personality. This volume is a study of 58 families with 76 children under eleven years of age in a Philippine village.

The combined studies of cultural anthropologists and sociologists in the Philippines specifically the writings of Frank Lynch, Jaime Bulatao, Mary Hollnsteiner, Chester Hunt and Robert Fox point out prevailing systems and values in family and community living. Their writings appear in publications of the Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila and in the proceedings of the Annual Baguio Religious Acculturation Conference which is now in its 11th year.

Fern Babcock Grant, editor, *Church and Community*. This bi-monthly publication of the Department of Public Welfare of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines has had several issues devoted to Family Life Education and other issues contain articles that are relevant to family life. Volume I, No. 2 (November-December, 1961) has "Responsible Family Living" for its theme and Volume IV, No. 6 (November-December, 1964) is on "Responsible Parenthood."

There are volumes of studies on Family Life Education published in the United States which give insights and guidelines in pursuing Family Life Education in the

Philippines. The following authors and their writings are what have given direction in the writing of this paper:

Erik Erikson, "Identity and the Life Cycle," in *Psychological Issues*, Volume I, No. 1 (New York: International Universities Press, 1959) and *Childhood and Society* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1950). Erikson's epigenetic principle and psycho-social phases have been invaluable in developing the self-other tasks of the different family life stages.

Evelyn Millis Duvall, *Family Development* (New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1957). Duvall's eight stages of the Family Life Cycle have been instrumental in constructing the seven life-stages of the Filipino family.

Other authors and their publications that have contributed toward the building of the personal-relational model will be given credit in the footnotes of each chapter.

V. THE METHOD OF THIS STUDY

This paper uses the theoretical model-building method of family life study. It makes use of concepts from the developmental, interactional and functional approaches as evidenced by the authors whose works are cited throughout this paper.⁴ The term "family" refers to "marriage

⁴Lengthy treatments of these approaches to Family

plus progeny"⁵ signifying the structural form of this primary relationship.

The model is constructed by presenting theological, psychological and cultural aspects of family life based on a deeper understanding of the self and broader conception of the self-in-relation, starting from the significant others in one's life and expanding into the vertical and horizontal dimensions of existence. Ideas and interpretations used are chosen from current socio-cultural studies in the Philippines as well as family emphasis in religious education and pastoral counseling in the United States.

Chapter II deals with the theological meanings of the self in its relation to God, others and itself. The family is the primal locus of the self's struggle to realize its fundamental relationship to God and to become part of the larger family of God. The Church is the community of faith that nurtures and sustains these relationships. The Judeo-Christian concepts which have a bearing on the personal-relation model are emphasized.

Chapter III brings out the psychological implications

Life Studies are cited in Clifford Kirkpatrick, "Familial Development, Selective Needs and Predictive Theory," *Journal of Marriage and Family*, XXIX (May, 1967), 229-240; and Harold T. Christensen, (ed.) *Handbook of Marriage and Family* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1964), Part I.

⁵Christensen, *ibid.*, p. 3.

of the self-system. Different definitions of selfhood from the intrapsychic and interpersonal viewpoints are cited. The developmental approach of Erik Erikson and his scheme of stage-crisis, modalities and radii of relationship; the interactive self with its complexities and polarities form the core of this chapter.

Chapter IV includes cultural studies in the Philippines centering on family relationships. Culture is defined as "the way of life of a society".⁶ Erikson's psycho-social stages and Duvall's family developmental tasks serve as the framework for a modified model of the seven Philippine family life stages.

Chapters V and VI present ways of carrying out the personal-relational model in the life and mission of the local church through growth, healing and action groups and through family group therapy and counseling. Basic concepts of group dynamics and conjoint family therapy are discussed briefly. Patterns and styles of group study and counseling are suggested for further experimentation and exploration in parishes.

Chapter VII contains open-ended conclusions based on the preceding chapters.

⁶Ralph Linton, *The Cultural Background of Personality* (New York: Appleton-Century, 1945), p. 19.

CHAPTER II

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

The personal-relational model of family life education is based upon theological concepts of the self in relation to God, to others and to itself. The self's primal relationship with God is established through God's action and man's response. God's activity begins in his creation of the world and of man in the world. God's creation is good and man as a part of that creation is to participate in His purpose for the world. God created man to enter into communion with Him and to partake of His love and freedom in personal existence and in interaction with fellowman. It is with others that the self experiences communication, participation and reconciliation. It is in relation to itself that man discovers self-awareness, self-knowledge and self-transcendence. All these are God-given gifts of living-in-relation. Deep insights into the nature of relationships are found in family life. It is a covenantal fellowship under God, committed to the task of nurturing the personal core of the individual and to his total involvement in the life of persons in community. Deeper understanding and experiencing of this commitment is found in the Church, the larger family of God called to a relationship of love for each other and for all peoples in the world.

THE SELF IN RELATION TO GOD

Communion. God grants to man a unique self that can participate in communion, love and freedom. God addresses man, confronting with the choice between life and death. When man chooses life, he says "yes" to God's purpose for man in the world. He acknowledges God as his "Creator, Sovereign and Redeemer"¹ and lives a life of response to God's saving activity in the world. When man chooses death he says "no" to God and the purposes of God in the world are negated by the self's egocentric purposes. The world becomes the arena of man's manipulation and people and things become instruments in man's search for himself.

God speaks to man who seeks to know himself through a community of men who have responded to God's confrontation. The Biblical faith speaks of God addressing the community of Israel, bringing them to an awareness of who they were and what their relationship to God meant. God entered into a covenant relationship with the people of Israel by taking the initiative to make himself known to them. "I will take you for my people and I will be your God"² . . . "I have called you by name, you are mine."³

¹H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Responsible Self* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1963), p. 29.

²Exodus 6:7.

³Isaiah 43:16.

This covenant is personal in that the individual is known by God. It involves a dynamic and deep relationship and the Bible speaks of this experience in terms of the husband-wife relation "wherein each one gives himself to the other and yet discovers that in that very giving the full meaning of his own selfhood."⁴ This covenant is also relational in that God establishes his identity to man and man's identity is derived from his experience of God's reality in his own life and in life together as the people of God.

Love. The self has a loneliness within him that springs from his feelings of finiteness. He breaks away from his Creator and tries to create some kind of life for himself. It was the Apostle Paul who cried out, "What a wretched man I am"⁵ and every self shares in this predicament of despair within and alienation without. God's love caused Him to come into the world and live in personal relationship with all the children of men. God in Christ offered his divine gift of love. In Jesus Christ, man experienced for himself what God's love can do for man and what it means to become channels of the love of God to others. "In His life there is revealed the companionship

⁴Charles R. Stinnette, Jr., *Faith, Freedom, and Selfhood* (Greenwich: Seabury Press, 1959), p. 113.

⁵Romans 7:24.

of His love; in His death, the sacrifice of love; and in His resurrection, the triumph of His love."⁶ Redemptive love restores man into right relationships with God who is the "ground of his being." "God's being is the being of love and God's infinite power of being is the infinite power of love."⁷

The self's ability to love is always the result of having been loved. "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the expiation for our sins."⁸ Man needs love desperately and demands perfect love which only God can give. Yet the community of those who follow Jesus Christ have been called of God to be a community of love. God in Christ manifested that divine love is love in action. And in that love man has also received God's commandment to love Him and to love his neighbor as himself.⁹ Man's work of love is a response to what God has done and continues to do among men.

The first Christians received God's abiding love through the Holy Spirit in the *koinonia* or fellowship. As Jesus' followers lived in relationship with one another, remembering what God in Jesus Christ had done for them, His

⁶Reuel Howe, *The Creative Years* (New York: Seabury Press, 1959), p. 72.

⁷Paul Tillich, *The New Being* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), p. 26.

⁸I John 4:10.

⁹Mark 12:31.

Spirit was at work and drew them into a fellowship where they experienced a new presence and power in their lives. They felt their continuing need of the Spirit and sought to maintain their corporate life. They began to understand that wherever the Spirit of God is, there one finds the love of God. They started to realize that when they were responsive to the Holy Spirit, they became the channels of this redemptive love to other men. So it is that God's saving love was first made known in Jesus Christ living in person to person relationship and now is experienced through the relationships of those who respond to the work of the Holy Spirit. The *koinonia* or fellowship of those who are born into the relationship of God's Spirit are sent into the world where they are to witness to the love of God and be the personal instruments of His love.

Freedom. The self in relation to God in Christ is confronted with the gift of freedom. St. Paul interprets this to mean that man is no longer in bondage and fear but has become a son of God who addresses him as "Abba, Father."¹⁰ His relationship with God has been made right so that he can appear before God as he truly is. "He knows himself to be 'something' and 'not-everything.' His 'something' consists of his self and freedom in relation to

¹⁰Romans 8:15.

the Eternal Thou; his 'not-everything' is a reminder that his life is always lived in relation to limits."¹¹ He accepts the limitations of creaturehood and is no longer bound to the fetters of self-centeredness but is free to act in response to God's love. He rejoices that in this struggle for selfhood, the same God who creates man and redeems him in love continually confronts him with His sovereignty and judgement. His destiny is under God who calls him to a life of self-giving. "Man's freedom is the expression of his uniqueness, his integrity and self-awareness, his capacity to act and decide for himself, his imaginative participation in more than one realm of time and space, his response and his gift-giving in love."¹²

Self-giving as response to God's gift of love and freedom compels man to witness to that which he believes and experiences with his whole being. The gifts of the Spirit are to be shared in the community of faith where the self finds its meaning and purpose. "To know God is to be known of him and therefore also to know the self as it is reflected in God. The Church's external history of itself may be described as an effort to see itself in the eyes of God."¹³ It is in this fellowship where self-giving and

¹¹Stinnette, *op. cit.*, p. 105. ¹²*Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹³H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Meaning of Revelation* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1948), p. 88.

self-receiving is nurtured and sustained by a people who participate in remembering and interpreting its freedom and the source of that freedom.

Self-offering also means self-denial or the acceptance of God's governing action upon us.

It is the acceptance of God's acceptance of human limitations. It is the affirmation in relationships of the divine will, rather than the will of any finite agents of God's will. It is the acceptance of a restricted field of operation . . . the affirmation of the value of others . . . it moves toward creative, sustaining and liberating action in service to others.¹⁴

Self-offering or man's active commitment to life in Christ makes him a participant in a pilgrimage toward fulfilling God's intentions and purpose for man in the world. Man is to enter into communion with God who penetrates into the very depths of his being and there finds his brokenness and alienation. God in Christ offers man the gifts of grace and sonship and God's Spirit enables him to find fellowship with Him and with another in the divine interweaving of love and freedom.

¹⁴H. R. Niebuhr, *The Responsible Self*, p. 36.

THE SELF IN RELATION TO OTHERS

Communication. The self's fundamental relationship with God cannot be separated from his relationship with others. True selfhood calls for communication, participation and reconciliation received from God and shared with others. The question of identity, "Who am I?" requires other selves-in-relation who are able to give the answer. It is also from the quality of relationships with the others that the self can establish its own answer when the question "Who are you?" is posed. There is no true existence when the self is not in relation to other selves. Persons have to be in response-relations with each other. Before one can say "I" there must be the response of the community which calls the self into being.

Martin Buber reflects on the relation of self and community through the primary categories of "I-Thou" and "I-It" which define these relationships. In the "I-Thou" relation, man is known not only as object but as subject, as a person who is of intrinsic worth. It is in the "I-Thou" relationship that the real self emerges because it is in the person-to-person encounter that man finds the meaning and realization of his existence. "A person makes his appearance by entering into relation with other persons."¹⁵

¹⁵Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 62.

"All real living is meeting."¹⁶ The "I" cannot live apart from the "thou" and each life is dependent upon the between-ness of man and man.

The way of such encounter is to enter into the life of the other for his sake. It is to listen, to feel, to understand, to affirm. It is an enabling willingness for the other to grow, a willingness for him to find his meanings, to exercise his creativity, to become a free, authentic person. Such enabling willingness is mutual. Encounter is dialogic. 'Entering into' is two-way. And in every meeting with a 'Thou' the lines of relation are extended and consummated in an encounter with the Eternal Thou.¹⁷

In the "I-It" relation, man is known as an object to be used and is forced into the role of things. He is manipulated rather than loved and in this act separation and estrangement ensues. The "I-It" relation is necessary in the discovery and control of nature but it is only in the community of "I-Thou" that communication takes place.

Community, growing community . . . is the being no longer side by side but with one another of a multitude of persons. And this multitude, though it also moves towards one goal, yet experiences everywhere a turning to, a dynamic facing of, the other, a flowing from I to Thou.¹⁸

Participation. The self in relation to others demands responsible participation in community. Participation

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁷Paul B. Irwin, *Revelation and Christian Education* (Mimeographed) p. 8.

¹⁸Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Lt., 1947), p. 31.

refers to concrete action by the person, his involvement in society and ultimately in the universal community. H. Richard Niebuhr writes that "in the history of Israel and the early Christian community, the decisive question men raised was "What is happening" and then "What is the fitting response to what is happening?"¹⁹ Man has to make a response in affirmation of his relationship to the neighbor and in the exercise of his selfhood. The mode and spirit of this response determine the quality of relationships in community. The New Testament testifies to Incarnate Love as the mode of God's participation in community. Hence, love is the charter by which the Christian community acts in relation to persons, individually and collectively. Love yields the basic norms for justice such that in the process of participating in the social order, man responds to that which he thinks God requires of him. Personal response means placing oneself in reciprocal relation to the other. Jesus' participation in the life of man led him to feed the hungry, heal the sick, receive the stranger and free the prisoner. St. Paul interprets this mission of sharing and being with the other in his letter to the Christian community in Rome by saying, "Rejoice with those

¹⁹H. R. Niebuhr, *The Responsible Self*, p. 67.

who rejoice, weep with those who weep."²⁰

Participative action is the primary *modus operandi* by which grace is communicated . . . From God's side that is a completed action-in Christ, man's salvation has been once and for all accomplished. From man's side it is both a being and becoming--a fruit in the community of the Holy Spirit . . . the means by which one is caught up and renewed in faith.²¹

Reconciliation. The self in relation to others needs to experience reconciliation or the restoration of broken relationships. The self in the very depths of its being yearns for wholeness but finds that even as it communicates and participates in the life of fellow beings, one feels alienated and hostile toward them. What often passes for human love is "the forcing of another person into one's sphere of power and influence," loving him "not as a free person but as one who it binds to itself . . . It desires to be irresistible, to rule."²² The self's awareness of its inner conflicts and social struggles cause man to doubt whether salvation or wholeness is possible. God's love presents seemingly intolerable demands.

²⁰Romans 12:15.

²¹Stinnete, *Faith, Freedom, and Selfhood*, p. 151.

²²Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), p. 34.

. . . we both love and hate, we both want love and do not want love; we both receive love when it is given to us, and we rebel against love when we experience it. We are like this, and life is like this, and God meets us here in this confused state of being.²³

God does His healing work through the action of His Holy Spirit in the lives of men. God's Spirit calls for men to become the medium of God's redemption. The fellowship of the church becomes the context for this reconciling ministry. The people of God are to be the agents in bringing alienated and fearful people back to Him. They are to be the channels of God's gift of restored relationships between man and man.

A small group of persons can bridge the separateness of life by their concerned communication and participation. A family can be the means for experiencing renewed faith in God through the trust that one member gives and receives from the other. Every person has the God-given potentialities for growth and healing, for himself and for others. In Christ's Spirit we can become "members one of another."

Our faith is an affirmation of our belief in God the Holy Spirit who brings into being this fellowship, this family, this people of God that has been given the task of bringing to the needs of men the reconciliation of God's love. Each relationship trembles with the promise of the realization of the presence and power of

²³Reuel Howe, *Man's Need and God's Action* (Greenwich: Seabury Press, 1953), p. 130.

God. If we are open and responsive to Him, He speaks and acts through us, and we become the fellowship of the redeemed and the redeeming, the fellowship of the reconciled and the reconciling.²⁴

THE SELF IN RELATION TO ITSELF

Self-awareness. God created man as a unique self which possesses self-awareness, self-knowledge and self-transcendence. The self's awareness means it has consciousness of being a self. A few months after birth the infant gradually becomes conscious that there is a difference between "me" and "not me". This marks the beginnings of understanding oneself as a subject within himself. As the child grows the "I" becomes an even more distinct self in relation to a "Thou" or to another significant self and in relation to an "It" or to things. Self-awareness may be undermined when the self's identity has been blurred or diffused so that it cannot of itself make the proper responses to "I-Thou" relationships.

Self-knowledge. St. Augustine writes, "The knowledge by which we live is the most inward (and certain) of all knowledge"²⁵ . . . "Who doubts that he lives and

²⁴*Ibid.*, 141

²⁵Erich Przywara, *An Augustine Synthesis* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), p. 4.

remembers and understands and wills and knows and judges?"²⁶ Man has been given the capacity for determining some form of action. He is able to relate past, present and future in his experience, perceive reality and use symbols and concepts. He has the power to objectify his actions. Man is the knower even when he is the very object of his knowledge. Man's self-knowledge often causes him to take pride in his own capacities and to use these to gain advantage over others. The Biblical injunction is that man knows himself only as he comes before God and acknowledges that he has a self to give back to the Source of his being.

Self-transcendence. The self has the unique capacity to view itself and to look for something beyond itself. It is able to be both subject and object to itself. It recognizes man's inability to find meaning in himself. He cannot identify meaning with self-knowledge or rationality only since man is capable of transcending the rational process. And when he transcends his reason he realizes that his own mind cannot be the ultimate principle of interpreting the relation of man to the world. Man cannot also identify meaning with causality in nature for his freedom is not found in the processes of nature.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 6.

Causal links point to a mystery of creativity. It leads man to search for God in whose image he is made.

Man is also able to recognize "that there is always at least a potential rift in the self."²⁷ When the "I" who values and judges has to face up to motives and meanings in his life he finds that there are resistant forces in him. Reinhold Niebuhr refers to this as the self being "betrayed by its very ability to survey the whole to imagine itself the whole."²⁸ But the same self is able to stand over its resistances and desires. The self-transcendent self can find "the ultimate freedom of the self over its inner divisions."²⁹

Lewis Sherrill refers to self-transcendence as spirit. Spirit consists of "intangibles produced by human thought, a dynamic entity and a unique constellation of all that is within a self."³⁰ Sherrill adds a relational meaning to spirit in ascribing to it a "forth-going quality . . . what is breathed forth or wafted toward another, or what is taken in from another . . . the forth-going of real being. It is the intangible totality which

²⁷Lewis J. Sherrill, *The Gift of Power* (New York: Macmillan, 1958), p. 12.

²⁸Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Self and the Dramas of History* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), p. 39.

²⁹Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1964), Vol. I, p. 17.

³⁰*Ibid.*

the self is, and at the same time is the forthgoing of that intangible totality toward and into others."³¹

The Self as Being and Becoming. Man's being and becoming are dramatically portrayed in the first chapter of Genesis. Man is made in the "image of God" and this act of God is the basis of his God-given identity or being. It is man who receives God's commandment to have dominion over the earth and its bounties. It is man who receives His blessings over the creative use of his own capacities. It is man who receives the "breath of life" from God and it is through this Self-giving and self-receiving relationship that man comes to himself.

It can be said that when man as a personal being knows himself as "I," he is then able to enter consciously into a relationship with infinite Personal Being who is God, who knows himself as "I am," who is within man, and yet is also infinitely beyond man; that this is a personal relationship between self and Self, analogous to but not identical with the relationship between human self and human self.³²

Another way of stating this fundamental relationship is to say that man must know God if he is to know himself or a man must know himself if he is to know God. It is in this relationship of self with Self that man finds his becoming. He acknowledges that his selfhood comes through

³¹*Ibid.*

³²*Ibid.*, p. 16.

his responses to God whose image he bears. He recognizes that he lives in the midst of forces to which he must respond at every stage of his life. He realizes that the responses of others also have their effect on his becoming. Becoming is a continuum of past, present and future. The past is incorporated in the present. And even as the self is engaged in the present it strives toward the future. This forward thrust of the self has implications for growth, change and transformation. Man is what he becomes in his relations to God, to others and to himself. The Christian faith believes that in Christ man can become what he has not yet been and whatever he is yet to be in all of his relationships. "In faith, . . . selfhood . . . is not a closed frontier ringed with fear of what is beyond, but open--a becoming that is willing to remain a becoming."³³

IV. IMPLICATIONS FOR FAMILY LIFE

Christian family living is life lived under God. Paul in I Corinthians (7:22-25) was worried that many married people placed more emphasis on pleasing each other than pleasing God. He aimed at giving full importance to the things of the spirit. Family living is a covenant entered into by the husband and wife which affects their

³³Stinnete, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

children, relatives, neighbors and the entire community.

The Hebrews considered themselves as the People of the Covenant and became known throughout the ancient world for its sense of protection of the family by community law:

Respect for parents was enjoined (Exodus 20:12), child welfare and pre-natal protection were provided (Exodus 20:12), inheritance rights were arranged in orderly fashion (Deuteronomy 21:15 ff.), strangers were protected from victimization (Leviticus 19:33), and the approved treatment of neighbors and their property rights was plainly understood (Exodus 22:16). It was an astonishingly high understanding of ethical obligations in interpersonal relationships; and its *raison d'être* was the pattern of family life.³⁴

The family covenantal tradition with its ideas of loyalty and mutuality carried into the New Testament and is used today in the marriage rites of the Church. The family of faith seeks to work out values in living, joining together in a common cause in the world and committing themselves in the service of the neighbor which is the expression of our love for God.

Gibson Winter points to the family's task as the "personal core," the nurturing of human potentialities amidst the dehumanizing processes of an industrial society:

. . . the new family is more a launching pad than a foundation. This launching process is critical for the future of the child, as the image suggests; yet the child's future will not be expressed through loyalty to the family but rather through achievement of values

³⁴W. A. L. Elmslie, *How Came Our Faith?* (Cambridge: University Press, 1948), p. 129.

which the family has enabled him to acquire. Personal and moral stability are the main contributions of this familiar structure to the child's future. Thus, the family is the basic structure for transmitting the personal core which makes a society possible and human.³⁵

Family life is a calling or vocation to create some kind of significance. Erik Erikson's use of the word "generativity" as the task of the middle years has theological implications. For generativity means "the interest in establishing and guiding the next generation."³⁶ It is a calling not just within the family but toward a continuity of past, present and future, of participation in the events and affairs of the world where God is constantly at work. It calls for the creation of love, where significance for each other points to significance in the larger context of community.

Christian family living also means understanding our roles as spouses or siblings, each seeking more training and skill in fulfilling that role. For example, a father needs the ability to counsel and restore broken relationships and a mother needs to know more about the dynamics of growth and interpersonal relations.

A radical dimension to family ties lies in Jesus' teachings. Paul Tillich observes:

³⁵Winter, *op. cit.*, pp. 211-212.

³⁶Erik Erikson, "Identity and the Life Cycle," *Psychological Issues*, I (1959), 97.

Jesus uses the family relations as symbols for a relation of a higher order, for the community of those who do the will of God. Something unconditional breaks into the conditional relations of the natural family and creates a community which is as intimate and as strong as the family relations, and at the same time infinitely superior to it.

Family relations are not unconditional relations. The consecration of the family is not the consecration for the final aim of man's existence However in spite of its radicalism, the Christian message does not request the dissolution of the family. It affirms the family and limits its significance This is part of the profound ambiguity of the biblical teaching about the family.³⁷

Thus we are to understand ourselves as part of a larger family of God and to treat each other as children of God. Our most intimate earthly ties and our strongest human desires come under God who is our Creator, Sovereign and Redeemer.

V. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CHURCH

The Church is the people of God. The *ekklesia* originally meant a gathering of people whose main thrust was to witness to the world the faith they professed. They are called to mission, to follow Jesus' way of life, a love-relationship with God, neighbors and self. They are "mutually responsible to God and to one another through worship, through mutual edification . . . through service to fellow-churchman and to those outside the church,

³⁷Paul Tillich, *The New Being* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), p. 106.

through action within society."³⁸

The people of God have the mission to become channels through whom every believer experiences God at work in his own life and in the lives of other people. A living encounter with God and fellowmen is one goal of the Christian community. This encounter may take place in the family, in groups and wherever two or three are engaged in discovering God's way for the salvation and wholeness of all men. The Christian faith demands a life which transcends the boundaries of culture. The Christian is a product of his culture and yet he has to develop a way of life that takes his culture, his Judeo-Christian heritage and his God-given mission into account.

The Christian faith "is communicated by a community of believers and the meaning of faith is developed by its members out of their history, by their interaction with each other, and in relation to events that take place in their lives."³⁹

What the congregation as a group says and does in the community is the meaning they give to their faith . . . within this interactive frame of reference . . . worship, searching, development of ethical positions on issues, and ministry to the community are all

³⁸Howard Grimes, *The Church Redemptive* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958), p. 46.

³⁹C. Ellis Nelson, *Where Faith Begins* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1967), p. 10.

subordinate to the congregation's purpose of being the people of God in a certain time and place."⁴⁰

It is the task of the people of God to introduce every member into the covenant community. In the Old Testament *qahal* or the body of people who have been called together enter into a compact with God who chose them.⁴¹ God is to guide their destiny, they belong to him and he to them. The New Testament speaks of the new covenant in Jesus Christ. In Christ the people find a new way of life, a fellowship of love and concern which has to be manifested in a world where both good and evil exist. It is in this community that the child is to experience God's goodness and trustworthiness. It is in this fellowship that the young person sees the struggles and decisions that human beings have to face. It is where every member is confronted with the message of God's creation, lordship, redemption, providence, judgement and man's vocation and life of faith.⁴²

The Church is a community of men and women who are to proclaim and teach the good news of God in Jesus Christ. They are to tell the story of God's disclosure of himself

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

⁴¹ Grimes, *ibid.*, p. 39.

⁴² Lewis J. Sherrill, *The Gift of Power* (New York: Macmillan, 1955), p. 92 ff.

in history centering in incarnate love and new life. They are to explore the meaning of the Christian faith in their life together and to communicate this faith in their different areas of responsibility. They are to be "participants in the life of Christ, both in His suffering and crucifixion and in baptism into newness of life."⁴³ They are the media or agents through whom the love of God find expression in living relation with people all over the world.

The Church is the body of Christ. It is a continuation of what Jesus said and did, the extension of his life and teachings in the world. The heart of Jesus' mission was reconciliation between man and man and man to God. Man knows himself through Jesus Christ. "In him God's plan for man is disclosed, God's judgement on man fulfilled, God's redemption of man accomplished and it is in Jesus Christ that the world is created as the arena for God's dealings with man and man's dealings with God."⁴⁴ Through Christ man discovers that he does not live for himself but finds himself in another. This biblical injunction calls for encounter and engagement in the lives of

⁴³J. Robert Nelson, *The Realm of Redemption* (London: Epworth Press, 1951), pp. 88-89.

⁴⁴Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics, A Selection*, G. W. Bromley, (ed.) (New York: Harper and Row, Harper Torchbooks, 1961), p. 111.

fellow beings. There is no appropriation of the gospel if it is only understood or intellectualized but not lived by that person in relation to another.

The Church is the fellowship of the Spirit. It is a *koinonia* involving participation in that common reality, the Spirit of God that was in Jesus Christ and is still with us through the Holy Spirit. It is communion with God by those who receive power from him. It is partnership with those who have personally responded to God's gift of grace. The coming of the Spirit to the believers in the early church was a mission to witness to the community, the nation and the world. The believers have to proclaim that God continually offers his love inspite of opposition coming from within man and the forces around him. The Church's mission of redemption and reconciliation can only take place in a social context. The Church is a company of persons who are renewed by Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit to bring about transaction, interrelation, partnership and covenant among peoples where they are. It means that one life touches another and yet another, mediated through our joint participation in Christ's spirit.

SUMMARY

The theological foundations of personal-relational living start with the self in relation to God who created man for communion, love and freedom. God communes with man and calls him into a covenant relationship with Him in a community of persons who seek to know who they are and what their relationship to each other and to God means. But man's loneliness, anxiety and alienation cause him to break away from his Creator and lord. God in Christ came into the world to live in a living encounter with all the children of men and call everyone into fellowship with Him through His Holy Spirit. Man is bestowed the freedom from restraints that bind him to the fetters of the self into a life of self-offering and self-receiving.

There can be no self to offer if there were no selves to receive it. No self can realize itself apart from a community of persons who are in communication with one another. The "I" or the person who is of worth before God encounters a "Thou" or another person who is also of worth before God and in-depth dialogue takes place. There is participation in the life of the other, every man responding to that which he knows God requires of Him. It means being responsive and responsible in the ordering of love and justice in the world. It means the restoration of broken relationships between man and man so that they

become one in Christ, in whose Spirit men are reconciled.

The self possesses self-awareness or its consciousness of being a self distinct from other selves; self-knowledge of its ability to know what is going on even when he is the very object of his knowledge and self-transcendence; this involves the capacity to view itself, to find meanings outside itself, to become a dynamic unity and to enter into the life of another. These dimensions of selfhood are built-in potentialities for the self's being and becoming, a moving toward its destiny in God's eternal purpose for every man and for the world. The Christian family is a paradigm of personal-relational living as it endeavors to provide the experiences and the conditions wherein individuals become mature and responsible persons in their response to God and to life-in-community. The Church is the community of persons and families who are called by God to a relationship of love and concern for each other and for the whole world.

CHAPTER III

PSYCHO-DEVELOPMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Definitions of selfhood which psychologists have advanced have the elements of either the intrapsychic or the interpersonal or both. The personal-relational model recognizes both components and selects three developmental schemes which are germane to the development of the model. Sigmund Freud's psycho-sexual model is basically intrapsychic and views the individual as pushed by biologic life force which enables him to achieve sexual maturity or which could lead to pathologic conditions if fixated at stages before maturity. Harry Stack Sullivan questions Freud's biologic approach and maintains that self-dynamism emanates from interpersonal relations and stages of life relate to social patterns of interaction. He attempts to show how culture helps make up the fabric of the self-system. Erik Erikson broadens Freud's psycho-sexual stages and also includes interpersonal factors. His psycho-social scheme forms the basic psychological framework for the personal-relational model.

I. THE PSYCHO-SEXUAL MODEL OF SIGMUND FREUD

Freud's psycho-sexual model¹ postulates that the self goes through biologically-determined stages of growth which is primarily motivated by *libido* or life force. *Libido* pushes the individual toward the achievement of mature sexuality if no serious obstacles are met along the different stages. Frustration comes if this life force is blocked or impeded in its progress. The *oral stage* of sexuality is during the first year of a child of either sex. The infant turns toward the mother to gratify the libidinal energy and pleasure centered in the mouth. The *anal stage* comes at ages one to three and the *libido* centers in the anal zone. The child is chiefly interested in his body and on himself with only partial interest on others. The *phallic stage* is ushered in at about age three when the libidinal focus is on the genital organ but soon develops toward the parents. The *Oedipal period* which is part of the phallic stage usually extends from ages three to six or seven. It is a time when the male child's affection turns toward the mother and the female child toward the father. Sooner or later the child learns that sexual interest in the parent of the opposite sex is forbidden

¹Sigmund Freud, *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1920), pp. 328-347.

and the child wishes he could displace the parent of his own sex. If the child's guilt or fear of these desires make him unable to move ahead he becomes a victim of the *Oedipal complex* (on the part of the boy toward the mother) or the *Electra complex* (the girl toward the father). The *latency period* sets in at about age seven and lasts until the onset of puberty. Increased activity of the genital glands at this stage heightens the Oedipal interests. However, if this crisis was resolved in the earlier Oedipal struggle, the young child transfers his sexual affection toward others of the opposite sex outside the family in what is sometimes called the boy-crazy or girl-crazy stage. Where this life-force reaches its goal of genital development, then maturity is attained.

Freud's psycho-sexual emphasis has been critized as deterministic and one-sided. The expression of the life force is not centered on sex although every man's sexuality is with him from birth until death. However, a developmental view of psycho-sexuality gives clues as to where failures that produced pathologic symptoms may be found.

II. THE INTERPERSONAL MODEL OF HARRY STACK SULLIVAN

Sullivan's interpersonal model² focuses on the individual in his relations to other people and to his social setting. The process of becoming human is socialization because the self-system is basically social or interpersonal. The values of the culture are conveyed by attitudes of persons around the child. Sullivan's stages of development emphasizes the interaction of the individual with people about him. *Infancy* or the first stage begins from birth through the time when the infant begins to speak articulately. By a process of empathy the child at this stage is able to perceive the anxiety or other dimensions of feeling of the mothering figure. Through this emotional contagion the child begins to organize his behaviour in order to avoid anxiety and to find security and satisfaction. *Childhood* or the second stage starts from the use of articulate speech to the expressed need for playmates. Patterns of interaction between playmates and companions are gradually formed. The child begins to perceive the difference between masculine and feminine roles. The *Juvenile* or third stage lasts until the need for another person of one's own sex and of associations with

²Harry Stack Sullivan, *The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry* (New York: Norton, 1953), Chs. 4, 12, 16-18.

peers appear. Incipient patterns of intimacy are formulated at this stage. New ways of finding security and allaying anxiety are very strong. *Pre-adolescence* or the fourth stage marks the shift of interest from persons of one's own sex to the opposite sex. It also signals the eruption of genital sexuality. *Early Adolescence* or the fifth stage ushers in the formation of patterns of interaction in order to satisfy one's genital drives. *Later Adolescence* or the sixth stage begins the establishment of a love relationship with another person. When the other person becomes as significant as one's own self, maturity is reached and the person enters the last stage which is *Adulthood*. Adulthood is characterized by one's ability to maintain satisfying interpersonal experience. Happiness or unhappiness in relationship affect the sex life.

The development of the self-system is vitally linked to the significant people with whom a child feels he can relate, be it the parents, siblings or other people around him. The child sees himself as the "good me" when significant others show him love, care and respect; conversely, he thinks of himself as the "bad me" when the important persons in his life respond negatively. As contacts are expanded to include playmates, schoolmates and other adults in the primary group, the child is confronted with growing pains as well as pleasure of finding out what makes

him tick, with himself and with others. If the juvenile's relationships with others have been anxiety-producing, he develops "parataxic distortions" or distorted images of himself and of others. If he is fortunate enough to find sound relationships with peer groups in his adolescent years, these opportunities to compare one's thoughts and feelings with others which Sullivan calls "consensual validation" may correct his distortions. The self is made up of "reflected appraisals" or one's evaluation of what others think and feel about him. Attitudes toward self and others are very closely interrelated. "As one respects oneself, so one can respect others . . . if there is a valid and real attitude toward the self, that attitude will manifest itself as valid and real toward others. It is not that ye be judged, but as you judge yourself so shall you judge others."³

III. THE PSYCHO-SOCIAL MODEL OF ERIK ERIKSON

This dissertation will use Erikson's psycho-social model⁴ in attempting to raise issues relating to the individual growth of family members. Erikson starts with the

³Harry Stack Sullivan, *Conceptions of Modern Psychiatry* (Washington: William Allanson White Psychiatric Foundation, 1947), pp. 14-15.

⁴Erik H. Erikson, "Identity and the Life Cycle," *Psychological Issues*, I (1959), 15-100.

epigenetic principle which maintains that every human growth has "a ground plan out of which parts arise, each part having its time of special ascendancy, until all parts have arisen to form a functioning whole."⁵ Erikson divides the life-cycle into eight stages. Each stage is interrelated with other stages; each stage points to problems to be solved by the self and each step is a potential crisis upon which other developmental learnings are dependent. An inherent growth tendency forms the psychological base and a natural readiness for social interaction establishes the social base. The individual must be able to negotiate the specific tasks and achieve a predominantly positive experience of the crisis involved at each stage. The individual's achievement of the developmental tasks leads to happiness and a healthy personality. Failure leads to unhappiness, difficulty with later tasks and disapproval by society.⁶ Society primarily determines the way the individual handles the developmental tasks so that they fit into the cultural system.

The following chart illustrates Erikson's psychosocial model:

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁶Robert J. Havighurst, *Developmental Tasks and Education* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1952), p. 2.

ERIKSON'S PSYCHO-SOCIAL MODEL*

Stages	Psycho-Social Crisis	Psycho-Social Modalities	Radius of Significant Relations	Goal of Stage
I. Infancy: Birth - 15 mos.	Trust Versus Mistrust	Incorporative I: to get Incorporative II: to give in return	Maternal person or mothering figure	Drive and Hope
II. Early Childhood: 15 mos. - 2 1/2 yrs.	Autonomy versus Shame	Retentive: to hold on Eliminative: to let go	Parental Persons	Self-control and Will-power
III. Play Age: 3-6 yrs.	Initiative versus Guilt	Intrusive (male): Inclusive (female): to make (going after); to "make like" (playing)	Basic family	Direction and Purpose
IV. School Age: 6-12 yrs.	Industry versus Inferiority	Intrusive: Fantasy- to make things (completing) to make things together	Neighborhood - School	Method and Competence

*Adapted from Erikson, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

(continued)

Stages	Psycho-Social Crisis	Psycho-Social Modalities	Radius of Signi- ficant Relations	Goal of Stage
V. Adoles- cence	Identity versus Identity Diffusion	Intrusive: Mora- torium-to be oneself (or not to be) to share being oneself	Peer Groups and Outgroups Models of Leader- ship	Devotion and Fidelity
VI. Young Adult	Intimacy versus Isolation	Intrusive: Mutu- ality-to lose and find oneself in another	Partners in friendship sex competition cooperation	Affiliation and Love
VII. Adult- hood	Generativity versus Self-absorp- tion	Intrusive: Creativity-to make be, to take care of	Divided Labor and shared household	Production and Care
VIII. Mature Age	Integrity versus Despair	Intrusive: Leader- ship and Follower- ship-to be, through having been, to face not being	"mankind" "my kind"	Renunciation and Wisdom

Stage I: Infancy

"I am what I am given and what I can get." These include food, feelings and attitudes that the mothering figure manifests. The infant expresses his ego mode through incorporation which starts by sucking and later by biting that which reaches his mouth. His social mode is shown in taking versus holding which becomes an issue in the weaning process. An infant is dependent upon others to provide for his needs and the dependability and concern of the providers make for a child's basic trust in people. Mistrust or fear of deprivation or of being left out goes back to these experiences of being starved physically or emotionally in his first year of life. The conflict between trust and mistrust continues throughout his life but the infant who has experienced what it is to get and to receive from a mothering person is better prepared to identify and fulfill this task in the succeeding stages.

Stage II: Early Childhood

"I am what I will let go or hold on to." This is directly involved with the retentive and eliminative modes of the ego. The child discovers that he can either let himself go or that he can hold on. He begins to exercise this as a psycho-physical issue but he also carries this over in his social interaction. He begins to differentiate "I" and "you," "mine" and "yours" particularly in relation to

the parenting figures. In other words, he has autonomy. Although related to muscle-training, holding on and letting go also contributes toward maturation and decision-making. The individual's self-control and will-power are beginning to take shape and parenting figures mark the privileges and limitations of the child. This stage can also bring shame or "exposure of intimate, peculiarly sensitive and vulnerable aspects of the self."⁷ And when a child is unprepared to be exposed, he protects himself at all costs particularly against the pressures of parental persons and later of society. Yet, this sense of shame could also help inform the self as to how to act in situations that arise in his life.

Stage III: Play Age

"I am what I can imagine I will be." The child visualizes himself as being as big as his parents and begins to imitate some of their roles. His ego mode is that of intrusion through vigorous movements and incessant talking or by attacking other children. Intrusion suffers a genital setback when a boy realizes that he is sexually inferior to his father and cannot have the sexual relationship that his father has with his mother. The girl has a

⁷Helen Merrill Lynd, *On Shame and the Search for Identity* (New York: Science Editions, 1965), p. 27.

bigger setback when she realizes that her genital make-up is not like a boy's and she may compensate by making herself look nice and by endearing herself to others. Genital awareness could contribute toward developing masculine and feminine initiative and the acceptance of differentness. Or it could lead to guilt feelings in relation to his parents, siblings and the important people in his life. At this stage a child does more things on his own, imitating activities and attitudes of the basic family or by endeavoring to do something different or special. The need for guidance is strong at this period as the eagerness to make and make like can develop purpose and direction in pursuing work and relationships. Or it can lead to guilt feelings related to the unresolved conflict or competition with the parent of the same sex in favor of the parent of the opposite sex. Or both parents may become reprehensible to him and he internalizes these feelings. In many cases this comes out later in a morbid conscience and in difficulties with masculine or feminine roles.

Stage IV: School Age

"I am what I learn, produce, create." The school child learns to work with tools and to make things with others. This intrusive mode will continue throughout his lifetime, expressing itself in active or passive ways. His mastery over things and toys will give him a sense of

mastery over later situations wherein his skills and past experience will have to be marshalled for communal work. Neighborhood friends and schoolmates make up a world of work and play. School can mean study and games too. This sense of industry sets the stage for the workaday world. The socio-economic ethos of the community begins to make itself felt by the child as he plays grown-up roles. He finds out that there are expectations and social functions that a man or a woman has to fulfill. He discovers that he has to use things and money in order to be like them. Inadequacy and inferiority are augmented when family and school life have not enabled him to enjoy working and playing and to realize that there is so much to explore, discover and create.

Stage V: Adolescence

Youth consolidates inner meanings and experiences with others to the question "Who am I?". Erikson defines this search for identity as "the accruing confidence that the inner sameness and continuity prepared in the past are matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meanings for others."⁸ What a young person thinks and feels he is and what he hopes to be call for the validation of

⁸E. H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York: Norton, 1963), p. 261.

important others in his family and society. The adolescent and his peers enter into a transition period between childhood and adulthood wherein the physiological changes within and the social pressures without compel them to face up to adult choices that have to be made. This period is often called a psycho-social moratorium in that the young people become introspective or even morose and sluggish. This interim period can also be a time for finding out what his roles are and for building up one's ideals of devotion and fidelity. The adolescent needs the approval of peers and outgroups and the acceptance of adult guarantors. He needs the kind of acceptance that causes him to be in charge of himself and to fulfill certain expectations for himself and for others. Inability to take hold of some kind of life and to meet the social roles that are normally his lead to a sense of being lost and without norms to follow. Problems are compounded when the teenager is unable to choose an occupational identity or when he has not learned to accept his sexual identity.

Stage VI: Young Adulthood

Young adults yearn for the self-other, for people of the same sex and especially of the opposite sex with whom one can talk, confide and dream. Mutuality becomes the ego mode and relationships that demand affiliation and love become the goal of this stage. But when one has not

established self-esteem and a sense of loyalty to another, he may have trouble entering into intimate relationships that young adulthood calls for. He has high hopes and expects so much from others yet he distrusts people and is anxious about situations that present themselves. It could well be that his attraction to the person he married is based on a survival pact or the idea of getting from the other what he thinks he does not have. Such a person avoids relationships that demand the unselfish giving of self. He becomes incapable of mutual appreciation and attention. He retreats and builds his defenses in order to ward off or to destroy forces or people that appear as threats to him. Intimacy engenders devotion which allows for differentness and maturation. When intimacy is not attained, isolation and distantiation which may be carried to extremes, gets hold of the individual.

Stage VII: Middle Adulthood

The middle adult years are a time for grappling with the here and now and the future. The here and now consists of family and community roles that one has taken on and that others have expected or accepted of him. The future lies in the opportunities open to the middle adult to engage creatively in the production of ideas and goods for the common weal and in caring and being cared for. Creativity is the ego mode and needing to be needed is the

confronting issue. One's family, occupation and associations are what contribute toward creating some significance and meaning for the present and for the coming generation. Through divided responsibilities and shared authority others are made aware of the richness of experience and the challenges for the coming years that are open to all. Unfortunately, the middle adult years may also bring stagnation or the non-productive ways of doing one's tasks and the unimaginative ways of relating.

Stage VIII: Older Adulthood

The "integrity" years confront a person with his own life. Making a complete life means going full circle from the dependence of early childhood to independence in later childhood and adolescent years to interdependence in mature adulthood. The ego mode becomes that of taking on the double-role of leader and follower. He lends support at certain times and he withdraws at other times in order to give opportunity for others to learn with him and to develop their unique possibilities. The older years call for a person's courage to be and to cast his lot with mankind's success without putting himself at the center of it and with humanity's sufferings without blaming it on the inadequacies of others or on the changing years. It means finding harmony within himself and with people of all ages and vocations. These years can also bring despair; that

life is no longer worth living; one is alone, fellow-humans have forgotten him and death lurks at every corner.

IV. RELEVANCE FOR THE PHILIPPINE SITUATION

The basic needs of individuals are among the universal aspects of self-understanding. Beyond food, clothing and shelter are one's needs to be regarded as a person in his own right and to be validated by significant others, especially in his childhood. Everyone needs to grow and stages of growth (infancy, childhood, youth, adulthood), are similar all over the world although lengths of time vary from culture to culture or within cultures. Development is regarded by some psychologists and educators as a continuum rather than in stages. Erikson's eight ego-states uphold the fact of continuity: for example, trust which develops in an infant through tasting and testing relationships between the inside and outside continues throughout his life. While certain tasks are critical at specific stages, these tasks may develop sooner or later in a healthy (not just in a physical sense) individual. This writer believes that the use of stages in the life-span or in family development is a functional way of coping with intrapsychic and interpersonal growth and conflict. The progressive stages with their attendant crisis, modalities and radii of important relationships are most helpful to an

educator who aims at helping individuals and families attain maturity.

Erikson's stages has had objections as to whether the existence of stages and their concomitant tasks and inter-dependencies can be validly based on the psycho-social criteria selected.⁹ This comment is worth noting and in choosing Erikson's model, the writer was well aware of this but was encouraged by the fact that his studies included Sioux and Yurok Indian tribes,¹⁰ some of whose rituals and practices are very close to Philippine lowland customs.¹¹ Added to these are the considerations of the family as the basic unit of society in the Philippines and Erikson's construct that the accruing ability to interact with one's offspring is the paradigmatic interpretation of psycho-social development. This writer is also cognizant of the particular problems and needs that arise in each culture or society. There is need for research along these lines and also on stages of individual experiential life-spans coordinated with the family life-span in the

⁹Jack L. Rubins, "Changing Concepts of the Growth Process," *The American Journal of Psycho-analysis*, XXVII, (January 1967), 3-12.

¹⁰E. H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York: Norton, 1963).

¹¹As in William F. Nydegger and Corinne Nydegger, *Tarong: An Ilocos Barrio in the Philippines* (New York: Wiley, 1966), pp. 1-177.

Philippines. This paper can only begin to raise issues related to the psycho-social crisis deemed necessary for ego formation in Filipinos as individuals and as family members.

Stage I: Trust versus Mistrust

In a society where relations and servants are part of the expanded family, who becomes the mothering figure? Or is the child better off for having several maternal models? Also, do these persons instill confidence through their attitudes and actions, considering the fact that many of them are still in their teens and most servants are uneducated? Or is this a task that is learned by family members within the framework of the culture's life style?

Stage II: Autonomy versus Shame

How does the very young child learn to take hold and let go of things without demanding and eliminating stubbornly? Does the example set by other children and members of the family make a stronger bid for autonomy than the demand of parental figures? Why are Filipino children said to be self-conscious or shy? Why does the shame complex prevail throughout the life-span of most Filipinos?

Stage III: Initiative versus Guilt

In an authoritarian family where the child does as he

is told, how does initiative develop? Are there guidelines as to what a child can do on his own and what needs the approval of the basic family? Is a child given the opportunity to play and initiate activities that encourage his resourcefulness and responsibility? If guilt is the negative effect of initiative, how is this brought about and how is it different from shame?

Stage IV: Industry versus Inferiority

Where resources are limited, what does a child do on his own and with other children? How is the ability to discover and create things fostered in the school child? Does the school curriculum engender industry? How does the teacher enable a child to explore, create and work on his own and with others? In a culture where sharing rather than excellence is what makes for interpersonal relations, what meaning does industry have?

Stage V: Identity versus Identity Diffusion

What kind of identity does an adolescent Filipino seek? Is it of being his own self or is it closely tied up with family identity? Or are these polarities to be maintained? Is identity developed or diffused when there is a close identification of the son to the father (particularly regarding the guardianship of property or taking over the father's trade)? How is the search for one's identity

related to the country's search for a national identity?

Stage VI: Intimacy versus Isolation

Why is having a family a major goal for a Filipino young adult? What are the roles a young adult has to learn? What are the appropriate gestures of intimacy between friends of the same sex and of the opposite sex? Is it possible to maintain a balance between the time-honored and the modern ways of seeking and expressing intimacy? What are the guide-lines for mate-selection? Is isolation influenced more by intra-psychic or interpersonal factors?

Stage VII: Generativity versus Self-Absorption

How does the need to be needed manifest itself in middle adulthood? What are the challenges to generativity in the adult years of the Filipino? What kind of relationship exists between middle adults and children in the family? Between middle adults and adolescents? What are the symptoms of self-absorption? What makes for generativity in a member of a family and self-absorption in another member of the same family? In a culture where the parents get the honors their children have attained, how is the sense of achievement fostered?

Stage VIII: Integrity versus Despair

How do Filipinos who reach this stage of life face it? Does the shifting authority from grandparents to

parents affect the older person's sense of integrity? Do individuals in their older years tend to look back to the "good old days" or do they accept life as it is? What are the alternatives open to the bachelor or spinster in his older years? How does an older adult face the fact of death?

The "New Filipino" will profit from a deeper psychological understanding of selfhood. Man desires to grow, to become whole, to reach maturity. But anxieties and fears make him "shrink back" to earlier stages of his psyche or to remain static. Freud pointed out different response patterns the individual develops to defend himself in the difficult task of maturing which psychologists and psychotherapists have used:¹² resistance or opposition to get at the unconscious or to suggestions or actions of others; repression or keeping some undesirable impulse or feeling from conscious awareness; denial or making one's self believe that something never really happened; projection or attributing one's problems or points of view to events or to others; rationalization or making up reasons to defend one's action; displacement or the substitution of an idea or thought with another which is connected with it and

¹²Freud, *op. cit.*, pp. 348-366.

sublimation or the use of other channels of expressing the life-force in socially approved ways.

Conflicts within the self also mean conflicts in interpersonal relations. When a child has unfortunate experiences with others then he develops anxiety and grows up with a distorted picture of himself and of others. When he experiences satisfaction and security through being cared for and accepted by the significant people in his life, then he feels good about himself. George Herbert Mead affirms that "we are in possession of selves just in so far as we can and do take the attitude of others toward ourselves and respond to those attitudes."¹³ Martin Buber says, "The real self appears only when it enters into relation with the other. Where this relation is rejected, the real self withers away."¹⁴ At another time he writes, "Concentration and fusion into the whole being can never take place without me, I become through my relation to the *Thou* as I become *I*, I say *Thou*."¹⁵ Charles Stinnette posits that "Man discovers himself only in relation to another . . . (to) become himself, man requires the resistance of others as well as their acceptance, judgment

¹³George Herbert Mead, *The Philosophy of the Present* (Chicago: Open Court, 1932), pp. 189-190.

¹⁴Martin Buber, *Eclipse of God* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952), p. 128.

¹⁵Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), p. 17.

as well as grace."¹⁶

Each person has to work through and solve problems-in-relation so that he may grow from the experience into a mature self who can face reality and make decisions in every situation. Crisis in the individual or the family presents either achievement or failure. The life-history of the individual and the crisis that occur in his life-span are inextricably tied up in his relationship with others, so that nothing ever happens to a person alone. The choices an individual or a family makes will influence the present and the future for pain or pleasure, bane or blessing.

The human self strives for separateness and togetherness. If this is not kept in balance, conflicts arise, even at the unconscious level. If a young person lives only for others, to please them, serve and do as he is told, then he is not in touch with his whole self which also demands that he be involved in self-satisfying tasks and in deciding for himself. On the other hand, separateness may mean isolation from the rest of the family or community and may lead to a breakdown of communication with others and to the high wall of inner confinement that spells alienation and anomie. An integrated self demands a reconciliation of

¹⁶Charles Stinnette, *Faith, Freedom and Selfhood* (Greenwich: Seabury Press, 1959), p. 130.

individualization and participation. "A person is called into being out of relationships, but the person in his separateness is necessary to the achievement of a new relationship."¹⁷

VI. SUMMARY

Freud's psycho-sexual scheme helps in understanding the life-force which is inherent in a person. It also underscores the earliest years of life as crucial in the development of selfhood and the importance of positive experiences which parenting persons give to the growing child. Sullivan's interpersonal model serves as a corrective to the totally biologic approach of Freud. He believes that the self-system is constructed out of one's experiences with people. He also maintains that personality is not fixed in early life unless crippled by anxiety and presents the challenge of the years after age six in the refinement and formation of self-dynamism. Erikson's psycho-social stages take into account the epigenetic processes as well as the socializing forces that transform or deform the person. His emphasis on the crisis of the different stages of life point to the continuing struggle

¹⁷Reuel Howe, *Herein Is Love* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1961), p. 80.

of the emergent self. In either the inside or the outside theories of development, there are concomitant struggles between separateness and togetherness which have to be kept in dynamic tension and creative balance. All these are of relevance to the "New Filipino" who seeks a deeper knowledge of himself and a broader understanding of the self-in-relation.

CHAPTER IV

CULTURAL ADAPTATIONS

This chapter is an attempt to present the Filipino family's structural and relation system. An outline of family life-stages and a development of self-other tasks are proposed as guidelines in moving through the epochs of the individual and family life cycle. The tasks are adapted from the constructs affirmed in the preceding chapters and are based on the prevailing and the changing patterns of Filipino family life.

I. THE FILIPINO FAMILY SYSTEM

A network of primary relationships extended to consanguineous kin of mother and father forms the Filipino family system. Sociologists call it an extended bilateral family structure. Ranking in kinship ties follow bilineal degrees. The nuclear family occupies the highest order of priority followed by first degree relatives, then second, third and even fourth degree kin. The structure is further expanded by ritual ties. Sponsors of the conjugal couple in their respective baptisms and at their wedding plus sponsors of siblings of the nuclear family in both baptisms and weddings become closely affiliated to the family and are accorded preferential treatment.

The Filipino family system grew out of the family structure of the primitives, took shape under the influence of Hispano Catholic ideals, and is presently challenged by the impact of American individualistic emphasis. The family structure is being modified by the growth of new concepts which challenge the rigid social structure of the past. The resultant cultural clash produced confusion and conflict and uncertainty although the basic family structure seems highly resistant to change.¹

The extended bilateral family structure has widespread influence in the political, economic and social life of every community and the nation. Families control the political arena and it is not uncommon for a senator or congressman to have kinship and ritual ties with those who hold major offices among his constituency or in the nation's capital. Families dominate the economic and social areas and some kind of contact with those who have influence becomes a necessity for employment or for gaining status. The prevailing family system emphasizes loyalty and priority to those with whom one has kinship or ritual bonds while minimizing individual initiative and community responsibility.

The Filipino family system may also be interpreted in terms of the familial relationship it fosters:

There are three possible ways by which a parent can establish a relationship with the child. The first way can be termed *ako at siya* (I-It). The child is treated

¹Chester L. Hunt, *Sociology in the Philippine Setting* (Manila: Alemar's, 1954), p. 91.

as a third person, almost like an object, as an outsider.

The second way is the *ako at ikaw* (I-You) relationship. The child is then treated as person with dignity and with needs all his own.

The third type of relationship is what is probably most commonly found in the Filipino family, the relationship of *ako at ako* (I-me). The Filipino parent looks on his child as a part of himself and treats the child as such.²

Parents believe it is their duty to look after the child's good and to see to it that he will not be a shame to the family. The parents make plans for the offspring, such as deciding on the profession he will pursue, the school he will attend or the life-mate suited to him. The offspring acquiesces because after all, his parents know best and they are his main source of moral and financial support. There are children who assume some independence especially in their older teens but parents generally feel repudiated when their son or daughter begins to live as a separate entity from them. They want to live their lives over again in their child. Even at marriage, the son or daughter has to maintain a strong degree of interdependence with parents and siblings or they will feel he has cut them off and this causes a major family shake-up.

²Jaime C. Bulatao, S. J., "Personalism Versus Efficiency in Business," *Church and Community*, (January-February 1967), 13.

The "New Filipino" longs for his personal freedom and individuality. He wants to be able to make decisions about his vocation, his life-partner and many other important issues in his life-world. But he is ambivalent regarding family ties over against individual choice. Consciously or unconsciously, he knows that getting along with others, self-depreciation and other-appreciation are among the instrumental values of his culture and that smooth interpersonal relations and sharing of whatever good one receives are of intermediate value. He is made aware of the ultimate values of his culture: social acceptance, reciprocity, solidarity, equivalence and the emphasis on limited good and underserved success.³ He is made to feel that sooner or later he will have need of his extended family and friends and unless he has taken them into account in his decisions and actions, he does not deserve their favor.

A restructuring of the family system is coming about and many Filipino families are being rocked from their established mode of living. The Filipino parent has to allow more autonomy and decision-making to his children. The family has to break the boundaries of interfamilial priorities in order for individuals and families to assume fuller

³A detailed study of Philippine values is found in a syllabus outlining basic points and collateral readings: Alenes de Manila, *Understanding the Philippines* (Manila: Ateneo de Manila, 1956).

participation in the wider context of communities. This means a family where each person is enabled to be himself, not an extension of the parent or grandparent but one whose needs, rights and responsibilities are recognized. The family is to nurture the personal core of the individual. Husband and wife are to come to terms with themselves as persons with their own rights and with particular roles to perform. They and their children also have independent and interdependent functions to achieve. Each one has to grant the other the freedom to express himself honestly without fear of being rejected or unloved. Every family member has to learn to esteem himself even as he acknowledges the worth of others.

The family does not exist for itself. It serves as the groundwork for learning and experiencing one's personal and relational task in community. It has been observed that the Filipino family system with its loyalty and support of the blood group has minimized obligations to broader units of social organization like the barrio, the town, the church and the stage.⁴ Nepotism is seen as a way of providing for one's own. Many families think that their communal obligations are fulfilled when they have dependent

⁴Robert Fox, "Pre-Spanish Influence in Filipino Culture" (Peace Corps Mimeographed Series), p. 9.

relatives in their households. For some, charity begins and ends at home. The challenge is for the family to bring up persons who serve not only those within the confines of their families but who are concerned with the wellbeing of every other member of the human community. This sounds unrealistic when one considers that many families hardly have the means for survival. Caring for one's own family must of necessity be the first and possibly the only concern. This writer is well aware of the economic problem and yet maintains that the economic is well tied up to the social ethos and breakthroughs have to be made with families who exist only for themselves and use educational, political and financial resources to fortify their own citadels and control the power of the community. Changes will also come about when more individuals and families will aim at becoming a part of the wider community's struggle for individual integrity and interpersonal responsibility.

II. PHILIPPINE FAMILY LIFE STAGES

The family is a fundamental institution of human development and community living. The education of the individual normally starts with the family group itself. There are stages through which every family passes although there are no pauses or breaks between stages, they

interpenetrate one another. Each stage has its beginnings in the previous stages and its fruition in the growth that is yet to come. Families vary in the span of their life stages, depending upon the ages of the couples when they get married and on the number of children they have. The rate of growth of every family member and the age when the offspring leave home also have to be taken into account

The following outline shows seven stages suggested for the Filipino family life-span based upon existing time-patterns of child-bearing and rearing, public education and the regular life-span of persons:⁵

I. Beginning Families: Married couples through the third year of their oldest child.

II. Families with Pre-School Children: Oldest child, four to six years old.

III. Families with School Children: Oldest child, seven to twelve years old or in Elementary school.

IV. Families with Adolescents: Oldest Child, thirteen to seventeen years old or in High School.

V. Launching Families: First child, gone to college or married to last child leaving home.

VI. Families in the Middle Years: Children have all married or are now young adults.

⁵The classification of stages is adapted from Evelyn Millis Duvall, *Family Development* (New York: Lippincott, 1957), p. 13.

VII. Families in the Older Years: Retirement to death of both spouses.

III. CORRESPONDING PERSONAL-RELATIONAL TASKS

Every person has to accomplish tasks at a given period if he is to move on to another level of maturation. These responsibilities take precedence over other demands on the individual and no one else can accomplish the tasks for him. Personal and family development are closely intertwined and the function or dysfunction of individual members affect all who are in it. A task emerges as crucial at a particular stage but the achievement of this task continues throughout the life-span of the individual. In the following pages the tasks stated in one stage will not be reiterated in the succeeding stages but the above principle of continuity is to be kept in mind.

The personal-relational tasks of the family and the individual emerge from one's understanding and commitment to God's purpose and continuing action in the world. Life is meant to be a wholeness and man's whole response to God is manifested in relationship to fellow-beings. Life apart from Ultimate Meaning is groundless and without an indelible identity. Relationships apart from Ultimate Concern become a vicious cycle of anxiety and other-alienation. So it is that as man delves into the practical, workaday aspects of

living, the fact of life being an ongoing interpretation and witness to the love and justice of God become the essence of life itself. Every task that is undertaken carries with it a theological understanding of life in the service of God and neighbor.

Beginning Families

Meeting self-other needs and establishing mutually satisfying roles between husband and wife. A good marriage has a high degree of mutual-need satisfaction. The needs of the self include: S-security and service

E-enjoyment and esteem

L-love and limits

F-faith and freedom⁶

The nature and intensity of these needs depend to some extent on the role expectations of each of the spouses. Husband and wife come with their individual aspirations and values to merge into an entity that demands cooperative endeavor. The awareness of their idealized self-other images and the realization of their actual selves will help them release their potential for deeper fulfillment.

Establishing workable relationships with relatives, particularly of the families of the conjugal pair. An extended family system necessitates the maintenance of an

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Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., *Mental Health Through*

independent-interdependent association with parents and siblings. Independence is best attained through a separate household and interdependence through keeping open the channels of communication with relatives.

Establishing ways of interaction with a wider circle of friends (of both spouses) and associates and community organizations. When a couple settle down in their home community, it is easy to maintain existing contacts but problems arise when friends and relations expect the respective spouses to be with the "group" as much as when they were single. Setting aside items in the budget for community involvement and limiting joint efforts in one or two organizations rather than joining too many groups may be a realistic way to have community contact.

Preparing for the responsibilities of parenthood.

Most Filipino couples prefer to have a baby within the first year of marriage. Society looks with favor upon those who get married and then plan for the coming of a new member of the family. It is also considered a sign of fertility and blessedness to have a baby during the first year or two of marriage. But many couples have yet to discuss birth control and the responsibilities of parenthood

Christian Community (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1965), p. 147.

which include provision for the physical and social needs of the baby and the financial condition of the family. Preparation for parenthood also demands knowledge in handling ambivalence and jealousy over an expected member of the family, the sexual adjustment to a pregnant spouse and the fostering of a positive outlook on childbirth.

Creating an atmosphere wherein the infant finds trust and security. A sense of basic trust in one's self and toward others is acquired in the first year of a child's life through receiving regular physical nourishment and dependable care. Trust in God who cares for each of his children has its foundation in the care of parental figures toward him. The warmth, affection and recognition of the child's needs instills in him a sense of his worth and signals the emergence of his individuality. As early as three months old, a child is able to smile or clasp a hand and parenting persons have to know how to receive and respond to such expressions of trust.

Enabling a child to experience guided autonomy in his daily activities. The child of one to three years is able to make choices within limits and to care for himself in certain ways as in feeding himself and in walking without any help. The child is very active at this stage and tries out so many things for himself. The child now

begins to exercise his rights as an "I" in relation to a "You". Parents need to help the child acquire self-control and self-esteem and to understand that others have their rights too and that there are ways of meeting the needs of each one. His training in meeting the complexities of interpersonal living begins when he experiences the mutuality of relation, each one, whether parent or sibling or friend, taking the other into account. The characteristic self-consciousness and dependence of the Filipino child on the will of his parents may be balanced if the child is given a chance to exercise his autonomy without fear of displeasing the authorities in his young life or of being rejected by them.

Families with Pre-School Children

Sharing the responsibility of parenting their own child. A child from three to six years old stays home most of the time. Many Filipino parents leave the child of this age to the care of helpers and relatives because they are both busy making a living. Or the mother is made responsible for the care of the child and the father is in charge of earning money for the family. This division of responsibility robs the child of the care and attention of both parents. Parents often give the impression of being inaccessible to their child. The need for a child to

relate to both parents particularly to the parent of the opposite sex should be noted by parents of this life-stage. The internalization of feminine and masculine roles begin to take shape and the child's interaction with both parents help develop both the masculine and feminine sides of the child, the reconciliation of which are essential for a healthy personality.

The discipline of a child is a battleground for many parents. Their respective upbringing color their attitudes toward the rearing of their own child. Recognizing the points of strength and weakness in one's background and relating the needs of the child to the changes of the times help parents to deal with the child as he is.

Enabling a child to achieve a sense of initiative and to be a participating member of the family. A pre-school child asks many questions and has a very active imagination. He tries out words he has heard and applies ideas he has learned. Parents and parental figures need wisdom and patience in answering children's questions and in dealing with their fanciful ideas. Parents are continually stunned by questions children raise about God and about life itself, such as "Who made God?" and "Where did I come from?" Questioning is a way the child uses his imagination and initiative in dealing with people and the world about him.

The child begins to feel inadequate as he puts himself in the role of the adults with whom he identifies. He feels that they are much bigger and know much more than he does. His wishful thoughts about becoming like his father also makes him feel guilty of replacing his father. The Filipino child feels even guiltier when he has feelings of aggressiveness and competition toward his parents and others who are in authority. If the feeling of guilt is not dealt with and channeled into creative expression the child may retreat into an inner world of his own or he may overcompensate by trying to please all the adults in his life. Many parents have to encourage the child's play-acting. Often parents say, "You're too small to do that," instead of appreciating the child's desire to be like an adult. Parents are to provide opportunity for the child to make things that are part of his real life and of his dream-world.

The child has to be given his share of responsibility in the home, even though the chore may take longer and may not be performed as well as when an adult does it. The child needs to take part in planning for family occasions such as birthdays and visits of relatives, so he will know that he has a voice in family matters. Most Filipino children are seen but not heard during family gatherings.

The pre-school child has to recognize the roles and

responsibilities of those in his family. This awareness may help him grow in his capacity to respond to them as persons and to form images of others and of himself that are of interrelatedness and reciprocity.

Families with School Children

1. *Enabling the child to develop his sense of industry and creativity in the home and with neighborhood friends and schoolmates.* The seven to twelve-year old child is eager to learn and do many things all at once. The first years of elementary school provide the challenge of learning to read, write and get acquainted with new subjects. He enters into problem-solving and decision-making situations. He begins to understand group goals and is to be given a chance to achieve them. Through his schoolwork and his interest in team play he discovers that his strength and skills depend on others, and on how they also use their abilities and talents. He has to make room for others; he cannot be at the center of things all the time. The elementary school child desires to excel in certain areas and he needs playmates and adults with whom he can share his hopes and ambitions.

When the child has had successful experiences in working and playing with others, this gives him a sense of his creative powers and of bigger experiences in store for

him. He also feels that it is wonderful to be in touch with many people, with adults like his teachers and with children in his school and neighborhood. When he feels rejected by his friends it makes him think he is inadequate. The release and handling of negative emotions are problems parents and teachers have to handle with the child. Their task would be to give guidance so that the child may be able to work through his problem satisfactorily. Work and play accomplishments help shape a person's attitudes toward his life-work in the coming years.

Maintaining effective communication within the family and in the larger community. The communication network of the family increases with its size.

In a family of three, the relationship may be outlined as follows: (1) The father and mother interact-stimulate and respond to one another; (2) the mother and the child, and (3) the father and the child interact in the same way. In addition to the direct interaction going on between pairs in the family, there are (4) the response of the child to the relationship of the father and the mother, (5) the responses of the mother to the relationships of the father and child, and (6) the responses of the father to the relationships of the mother and the child.⁷

Following this communication network, a family of four would form eighteen lines of interaction and a family of six would have seventy-five! Every person gets a

⁷Austin Porterfield, *Marriage and Family Living As Self-Other Fulfillment* (Philadelphia: Davis, 1962), p. 68.

different impression of the verbal and non-verbal cues each one sends out. The bigger the family, the greater the number of impressions and responses he gets from the others.

The home is a communications center where persons expect to be heard and received. It is a reconditioning agency for a father who has been subjected to pressures in his job, to a mother who has been doing routine work all day long and to children with frayed nerves from seven hours of classes in elementary school. Each one competes for the other's attention. It only takes one person in the family to cause a positive or negative communication chain-reaction. Coping mechanisms are subtly at work in the family's communication system and parents have to be sensitive to messages behind the words that are articulated or to silence and withdrawal.

Children bring home ideas they learn from the outside and many parents are reluctant to listen to them and to admit that they do not know some things themselves. Many Filipino parents are threatened by new concepts and views and dismiss dialogue by announcing that they know better by virtue of age.

The extended activities of the school child takes the family to wider contacts in the community. Parent-teachers associations, Boys Scouts, Bluebirds and other

organizations enlist parent participation. Effective communication with the larger community includes being involved with vital issues that need reflection and channeling energies through community structures that facilitate constructive action.

Families with High School Children

Enabling the teenager to understand himself and to develop his own life-style or identity. Thirteen to seventeen is sometimes referred to as the self-discovery age. The adolescent is intent on finding out who he is and what he can make of life. He can hardly wait to know what the future holds for him. But the transition from childhood to adulthood brings conflicting behaviour. He wants to be a grown-up like his parents but he also feels that he would not want to be like them, particularly in sharing their values and perspectives on life. He does not want to be included in family activities and he prefers the companionship of his peers. He wants encouragement and support from adults but he also desires to be left to decide and do things for himself. His struggle to know who he is causes him to temporarily break away from his family.

Parents have a very rough time at this stage as they feel out of touch with their very own child. They also have guilt feelings about the teenager's repudiation

of what they have tried to teach him. Filipino parents have difficulty making the shift, if they ever do, from taking the lead role to the supportive part in the adolescent's destiny. Allowing the young person a certain amount of privacy in the home aids in his effort to be by himself as he reflects on his uniqueness as an individual and on what he can be. Privacy also makes it easier for him to accept physiological and psychological changes which make him feel rather clumsy at this stage.

The adolescent is in the process of choosing a vocation. The Filipino parent feels it is his responsibility to choose for the young person so that his profession will be in consonance with the family's plans and goals. For example, every family wants to have a lawyer or a doctor, prestige professions which enhance the family's social status. The young person's call to participate in something greater than himself and from which he derives meaning and value for himself and for society is negated when the choice is done by the parents. In many cases the young person never makes his personal response to the call and blames his parents for failures he encounters.

The adolescent is also in the process of seeking a change in sex roles. For the young male, the awareness for procreation is intrusive and for the young female, it is inclusive. That is, sexual fulfillment is linked to the

consciousness of maleness and femaleness. This heightened stage of seeking out someone or something to be devoted to expresses itself in forsaking the old and going for the new. It is presumably linked with the cutting off of family ties, especially with the parent of the opposite sex and forming new attachments or attractions with a peer of the opposite sex. At its best it brings an at homeness with one's self and the ability to enter into mutual relationship with another man or woman.

Identity confusion or diffusion sets in when a young person is unable to link what he thinks he is with what important others in his community, particularly his parents think he is and to match what he hopes to be as an adult with the self-images he cultivated in his childhood. A diffusion of self-images causes loss of confidence in one's self and in society and produces difficulty in accentuating the positive. The adolescent regresses to earlier stages of the ego or refuses to move on to the next stage which is young adulthood. Erikson underscores the fact that identity is gained through the successful bridging of the childhood stages, the accruing sense of ego-strength and the attainment of meanings for the individual in his relationships.⁸

⁸Erik H. Erikson, "Identity and the Life Cycle," *Psychological Issues*, I (1959), 89.

Being open to the growing edges of a teenager's life and knowing when to exercise or withdraw authority. Parents and adults of the community often despair of youth's withdrawal or rebellion against society. The older generation seems to be the target of their ire. Yet the same youth need adult models with whom they can identify. These are the guarantors who have convictions about life and its issues and yet are open to new ideas and to change. Young people need counselors who can lend support to their struggle to be and to become.

Knowing when to exercise and to withdraw authority in relation to young people is a big order for the Filipino parent who is used to being the authority in the family. Authority as Jesus used it in the New Testament literally means "out of the being of"⁹ and implies an outgoing quality, one's granting of freedom and knowledge to another. Parental authority of this nature engenders the young persons' awareness of being in charge of himself rather than being an extension of his parents. Parents help create the atmosphere that enables the adolescent to sort out his thoughts and feelings and to experience himself as personal being and relational becoming.

⁹George T. Riday, *Understanding the Learner* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1964), Ch. V.

Launching Families

Rediscovering each other as husband and wife amid the throes of the launching period. This stage is a launching time in more ways than one. At eighteen, Filipino young people start going to college which often means living away from home. Sons and daughters have to sign legal family contracts such as the purchase or sale of family property. Many young people who are not in school marry at this age. They start their own home although in many rural areas they might become a family within a bigger family. Parents at this stage face the need of increased finances with which to send their child to college. College education is a big drain on the family budget in a country where college students can hardly find jobs to help support themselves through school and where parents do not expect their children to contribute toward their schooling. The marriage of one of the children, specifically one upon whom the family is dependent for income upsets the economic scale.

Parents also feel the slowing down of physical energies in their forties or fifties. At a time when they need physical assistance, their children start leaving home and relationships will be on a different level. This causes emotional crisis particularly for parents who have centered their lives on the children and have neglected each other. Couples who have not prepared themselves for

this shifting stage often suffer breakdowns and find it hardgoing for the rest of their adult years. The *querida* or mistress system usually involves men who are in this life-stage, perhaps in an effort to prove their virility to themselves and to others and also by way of escaping the pressures in the home-front. Filipino women who have not pursued vocational interests begin drifting into gambling tables and movie-houses to escape the drudgery of staying at home. Couples may be helped to face the varied demands of this stage by cementing their relationship as husband and wife, sharing each other's family roles and pursuing joint activities outside the home.

3. *Finding new meanings in interpersonal relationships and in one's work.* This mainly refers to the young adult in the family. He is considered an adult at eighteen because he has reached the legally marriageable age. Philippine laws provide that he can get married without parental consent, although that is an unthinkable practice, especially if one wants to remain in the good graces of the parents.

One meaning a young adult has to learn is the recognition of differentness and the capacity to find happiness in being a man or a woman. There are physiological and cultural differences in the role of men and women, but these differences enhance and stimulate relationships.

Over-emphasis on the physical aspects of sex has distorted the basic meaning of sexuality as one's capacity to relate to the other and of the common humanity of men and women. The family provides the setting for the interaction of both sexes and one's ability to relate to persons of either sex has its foundations in the family. The young person who is able to relate to both sexes is better prepared to participate in the complementarity and mutuality of daily existence.

Intimacy or the capacity to develop personal relationships without losing their respective identities is another task for young people. Unfortunately, the word "intimacy" has been associated in Philippine culture with sexual gestures and acts. Intimacy could mean the meeting of minds and the sharing of feelings between two people. It could mean a real friendship without sexual involvement. Young people also desire sexual intimacy, and he who has experienced personal intimacy is better able to enter into sexual intimacy in marriage.

The young person also needs to find meaning in his work.

Your world of work must have qualities of life-world. Else you become a nothingness . . . The first quality of a life-world is "I inhabit it. This is habitat for me" . . . Inhabit does not mean "contained in" but participating in" . . . "Participating in" means "I saturate the available world with the quality and intentions of my life. I invest in this world my motives, values, imagination, hopes, as well as my

technical know-how. I make offering of these, so it really becomes a place where life is celebrated.

Other people also have to *be there* for a job to become a meaningful world. A totally impersonal or anti-personal work situation becomes no longer a place to work or a place of work . . . A person is a life that deeply cares, that lives toward some horizon in decisiveness and integrity; with fellow human beings, then we know what we mean when we say that a work life world is inhabited by persons.¹⁰

Families in the Middle Years

Pursuing the meaning of maturity and generating it to others. "Maturity is the measure of the quality of our relationships and of the way in which we live them."¹¹ Maturity is a becoming, a pilgrimage which is never completed. It is a goal of personal-relational living and the middle years are a time for appraising one's maturity. Society expects the adult in his mature years to fulfill the social roles of being spouse, parent, worker, friend, church-member, club-member, citizen. Society also judges a person's maturity by his fulfillment of these roles. These are the objective measures but the person himself determines the meanings he attaches to the later stages of his adulthood.

Maturity implies the pursuit of long-term goals

¹⁰Ross Snyder, *On Becoming Human* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1967), pp. 103-105.

¹¹Reuel Howe, *The Creative Years* (New York: Seabury Press, 1959), p. 197.

rather than immediate satisfactions. Some adults prefer to settle for the comforts of home and familiar faces. They stay away from the complexities of community life. They prefer to be uninvolved after having attained some kind of stability in their home and profession. The mature person continues to grapple with situations that confront him in his different roles. He puts his talents and resources into harness. He tries to make a go of life in spite of blocks to progress and success. He is able to face the exigencies that often come in middle life--the death of a loved one, financial reversal, a shift in job, a change of residence. The mature person is open to new ideas and is willing to try other ways of coping with situations.

The mature person has the capacity to give and take counsel from other people. He cements the bonds of positive interplay between him and others. He has the ability to balance and unify daily experiences so that wholeness is experienced in spite of the manifold responsibilities of the middle life. He feels that he can contribute to the wellbeing of humankind because he has taken "hold of the 'substance' . . . the reality of faith itself, and . . . lives by it and in it."¹²

¹²Lewis J. Sherrill, *The Struggle of the Soul* (New York: Macmillan, 1955), p. 182.

These meanings are in store for a mature person or couple but it should not end with them. Each person has to face the task of generating or passing on to their generation and the next some of the meanings and values in their own lives. This begins by helping grown and growing children to become mature persons themselves. Then comes the invitation for others to partake of their accumulated knowledge and skills through the years. It may mean initiating a private enterprise or supporting a public issue. It may mean discovering latent talents in people and supporting them in their endeavors. Generativity is a self-other task in that the struggle for maturity and the search for meanings are not merely for self-glorification but for the growth and fulfillment of the others as well.

Families in the Older Years

Coming to terms with the significance of one's life and accepting one's place in the larger scheme of things. The senior citizen occupies a prominent place in Philippine society. Old age is a symbol of authority and wisdom. Reaching the half-century milestone in a country where many of the people die young is an achievement in itself. Older people usually stay with one of the married children or aging couples maintain their own homes and have

relatives and helpers to live with them. Problems come up in tri-generational families when the older person continues to exercise the authority he had as head of his own household instead of taking a back seat and allowing his married children to assume the roles that are normally theirs. The aging person needs to understand his place and the married children and the grandchildren have to know the older person's role in the family and the larger society.

The process of aging tells on most Filipinos so much more after fifty possibly because of the lack of nutrition and the hard work that adults go through to make ends meet for their families. The older adult finds that he is not as hardy and virile as he wants to be. His physical capacities are slowed down and these affect his control over his household or his job. In most instances, physical ailments curtail his ability to work steadily. Younger people appear on the scene and he feels threatened in his occupation. His children and grandchildren want to live their own lives and he may think that they don't need him any more. The older person who grew up showing the utmost respect to aging members of his family has difficulty understanding why he is not accorded the same honor. These are some of the problems that the older adult faces and he needs to be prepared to face this reality and to

find significance in the change of pace through the years.

The older years are times for discarding the accumulated debris of a lifetime, putting one's house in order and simplifying his style of existence. These include things, possessions, ideas and attitudes. Older people may become so attached to things and possessions because it gives them security and prestige in a society that does not have very much by way of material comfort. The sunset years are times for crystallizing ideas and translating them into some kind of action. Love and service become active words in interaction with kin and community. The aging person needs to be forgiving of negative attitudes toward him and to be forgiven of his own narrow-mindedness and intolerance. Despair fills the closing years of a person who cannot be reconciled to those who have offended him unless the offenders submit to having their egos crushed.

Dreary is the life of the older man or woman who fails to find life's meaning in the latter days. For the fullness of life is there to be captured and enjoyed to the point where "the cup runneth over." The gold is there in the hills for the prospector who is willing to go out and pan for it. Just so, the golden years glow for the man and woman who achieve the developmental tasks life sets for them in their sunset years.¹³

The older adult can be a vital link among persons

¹³Duvall, *op. cit.*, p. 472.

and in personal relationships. He can maintain a wide circle of interdependence with people of different ages and vocations. He can take pride in his children and grandchildren without feeling that they owe him a lasting debt. He can be a treasure-house of experience and memories. An older person can share his wisdom with the younger generation. He can help establish guidelines for others to emulate. He can lend support when needed and withdraw when not needed. He can have courage to be free and enable others to be. These are the choices open to him until death comes. And death itself can mean a doorway into greater life.

The "I am" which is the human soul, knows itself about to encounter, not a nothingness, but the "I am" who is God." And if one has been able to simplify the soul to its depths so that love is the foundation and essence of its being, that soul is at one with God."¹⁴

IV. SUMMARY

The Filipino family system is an extended bilateral family structure. It also encompasses ritual ties of the conjugal couple and of the nuclear family. A restructuring of the Filipino family system is taking place and signposts are needed to give direction. The outline of Philippine family life stages with corresponding personal-

¹⁴Sherrill, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

relational tasks at each stage are efforts toward a developmental and directional plan for Filipino family living.

CHAPTER V

PRACTICAL APPLICATION: SMALL GROUPS IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

This dissertation is limited to approaches in family life education in the Philippine Protestant Church that have not been fully implemented or have not yet been tried, namely: small groups of young people and of adults who belong to the same individual or family life-stage coming together for growth and healing and families going together for therapy and counseling. Small groups have existed for a long time but they have been more or less task or content oriented. The type of group recommended in this paper is the person or process centered type. Therapy and counseling have been limited to urban centers and these have been conducted on a one-to-one scale or have focused on couple counseling. The suggestion is for local churches to make family group counseling and therapy a part of its ongoing program. The World Council of Churches Consultation on International and InterChurch Cooperation for the Development of Family Life Education and Family Counseling also points to the importance of these two aspects of family life.¹ It is the writer's

¹Noted from World Council of Churches, proceedings of the Consultation which was held at St. Cergue, Switzerland, July 28 - August 2, 1967.

hope that the two major ways dealt with in the following pages may contribute toward family growth and healing, and to the application of the personal-relational model.

I. THE RATIONALE OF SMALL GROUPS

What is a group? A group is persons dealing with events of self-other relationship; "it is an insistent invitation toward becoming man; it is occasions 'to be' rather than to diffuse into nothingness."² A group means people who care about each other and are in honest communication, each responding to the call to become more than what he now is. "A group is mission tackling the world, making history, not just moaning about it. It is a covenanted people pioneering truth-trails through a wilderness, establishing a small colony of God's love for humankind."³

It is evident that the above meaning of a group does not refer to any assemblage of people. It means people who are in relationship to one another. There are two types of relationships: the one-to-one or dyadic and the group. Both types are of vital importance in the life of the church and in the lives of persons. The symbolic

²Ross Snyder, "The Christian Life is Group Life" (Mimeographed), p. 7.

³Ross Snyder, "What Makes A Group Redemptive?" (Mimeographed), p. 7.

language of father and son, mother and child or bride and bridegroom used in the Bible stresses the dyadic kind of relationship. Face-to-face encounters and "I-Thou" or "I-We" dialogues are elemental in personal maturity and relational bonds.

Group relationship means interaction with more than one person on a deeper level of existence. It has its beginnings in a family and then with playmates, peers and associates. Throughout the history of the Christian Church we find small groups of Christians gathered together for a common purpose. The Church is a group of groups experiencing God's redeeming love in and through one another, a *koinonia* of those in need of grace and forgiveness. Small groups in the Church may be the channels for the transformation and renewal of those whom it reaches. Such changes have been seen in families and in the workaday world of those who have experienced growth and healing.

The person-centered group allows us the "priesthood of all believers;" to "put on the neighbor" and "be a Christ to him," take upon ourselves his needs, frustrations and loves; make available to him the power and integrity of our person. Perhaps the Holy Spirit--God's indwelling within man--is not something which exists in the isolated individual, but only in man who is in such relationship with his fellowman.⁴

Religious educators have appropriated the concepts of group involvement and depth communication in carrying

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 6.

out the educational ministry of the Church. The group is seen from the standpoint of God confronting man in his particular situation and of man experiencing his relationship to God through persons in community. Groups do not just happen. Growth and change have to take place in order for a group to be redemptive, to be a part of the body of Christ. Each person who comes to the group has to be aware of the interpersonal processes and events in the group. Members have to come together for certain periods of time to engage in the dialogic process. Various labels have been used to call these groups: personal groups, interpersonal groups, sharing groups, contract groups, encounter groups, discovery groups, quest group, growth group, therapy group and many more.

Certain operating principles about the dynamics of a group have emerged and are offered here as the rationale for conducting family life education through small groups:⁵

Participation. Experiencing one's self is one aspect of participation. It involves thinking and knowing as well as feeling and intuiting. One is aware of what goes on in the group and responds to it as a whole person. Experiencing

⁵The concepts presented in this chapter are mainly based on Ross Snyder's unpublished articles on group life in the church which were mimeographed for use in Religious Education classes in the School of Theology at Claremont.

the presence of the other is another aspect of participation. It implies entering into the perceptual fields of the other members and having a stake in the choices that are made and the consequences that ensue. The member shares the load of others in his group. He stays with the group through the pains and joys of working toward a common purpose. Scapegoating, complaining, blaming and gossiping are seen as deterrents to meaningful involvement.

Mutual need satisfaction. The group is composed of persons who have needs and who also want to be needed. One characteristic of groupness is that the psychological needs of members overlap to an extent. In a redemptive group, mutual need satisfaction goes beyond prestige, class or selfish motivations to self-giving and receiving. Participants experience euphoria as well as tension; act and are being acted upon; know what it means to be accepted without fears or rejection or being ignored. Persons who enter into such reciprocal relationships usually stay with the group through thick or thin. Absenteeism or drop-outism may be symptomatic of unmet desires to be needed.

Communication. "A group is a communication net."⁶ It is a two-way system which involves the giving, receiving

⁶Snyder, "What Makes A Group Redemptive?" p. 2.

and checking out of verbal meanings and non-verbal gestures. It means listening to the other person, tuning in to his wave-length and to signified intentions. It is face-to-face confrontation and encounter achieved through words and deeds. Significant symbols and expressive gestures are used to convey meanings. Dialogue rather than monologue becomes the life-style of the group. It is not merely information-giving or a recital of one's deeds but a process wherein the person is communicated.

If today we were writing another set of Ten Commandments, one about communication would be very near the top. This "commandment" would say that to choose life, you have to choose communication. And *honesty* of communication is a touchstone of one's integrity . . . communication is communion and co-creation, an offering of ourselves to God and man. And so participates in Mystery.⁷

Authenticity. The small group may be the avenue whereby each person can be honest with himself and with others. Negative thoughts and hostile feelings are brought out and dealt with as thrusts toward coping with one's life-world. These are not condoned but are regarded as areas of weakness which can be changed. Acceptance, confession, release and response are components of a group in depth. When a member of the group can be transparent to

⁷ Ross Snyder, *On Becoming Human* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1967), p. 122.

others, his honesty and courage may serve as a model for others. Congruence is not easy for people who have learned not to show real feelings especially if they are negative. Letting off steam or taking it out on the other does not imply transparency. Genuine authenticity demands self-disclosure coupled with the capacity to enter into the life of the other. One is no longer a spectator but is on a pilgrimage with fellow beings who also have limitations and yet affirm each one's right to be free.

Interaction. Group life is maintained through roles that members of the group assume during sessions. Maintenance and group-building roles such as being encourager, harmonizer, compromiser, gate-keeper, feeling-expresser, consensus-tester, standard setter or follower, keep the group in action.⁸ Leadership is shared or rotated in most groups. Subgroups may take shape or shift from session to session. Feedback from each member of the group is encouraged. Groups usually go through a rhythm of deep and surface involvement. When pain becomes too hard to handle, the group takes a breather by surfacing. This is to be expected for as long as no one feels rejected and the group goes back to where they left off and works toward arriving

⁸Hubert Bonner, *Group Dynamics Principles and Applications* (New York: Ronald Press, 1959), pp. 391-393.

at a decision or feeling-level shared by the others. A group is free to interact when they have a sense of belonging and when one finds acceptance of differentness and diversity of opinion. There is unity without uniformity or conformity. The group moves from dealing with experiences in the past and with people outside the group to experience within the group in the recent past to what one is experiencing in the present moment.

Immediacy. This means dealing with life now, not merely preparing for life at a later time. It is being in touch with one's own life-world as well as of the other members. One comes to grips with questions of existence which has to be worked through in every life.

The man in a group is constantly dealing with encounters, experiencings, decisions and consequences; with "not me" and wills other than his own and just as intractable. He is dealing with history which is also his destiny. The daily miracle of creation-redemption is happening before his awareness and he is within it.⁹

The group seeks to overcome barriers to relationships in the past. Members face the conflict situations and negative feelings and find ways to resolve them. They recognize God's grace and judgement now and are present to each other as subjects struggling and yet becoming responsible agents-in-relation. Immediacy raises the question of the

Ross Snyder, "A Theory of Group Dynamics" (Mimeographed), p. 6.

meaning of the present and risks the answers to such question, answers which may spell action and suffering. "The group does meet for the nurture of its own members, but it also meets in order that God may have an instrument through which His power may come and through which His life may break in new ways for the world."¹⁰

Integrity. A striving toward wholeness within oneself and unity with one's fellows is a mark of integrity. This shows itself in the harmony of one's thoughts and feelings with one's action. This is given the acid test within a redemptive group that risks reflecting what is heard and seen of each other. Every group member has to be willing to undergo constructive change by facing the threats to his self-images. He examines his inner frame of perception and meaning to see if any of these need to be changed. He evaluates his own life-values and styles and seeks renewal. Integrity also means that the member is able to keep in touch with himself even as he is in touch with others. Their respective identities are not submerged but each one recognizes the personhood of the other and listens and responds from the depths of his being. He enables each person to appropriate meanings from the group.

¹⁰Elizabeth O'conner, *Call to Commitment* (New York: Harper and Row, 1956), p. 37.

His wisdom and knowledge of life is willingly shared and he recognizes that other human beings have a part in creating the meanings in his life.

II. PATTERNS IN SMALL GROUP LEADERSHIP

The Leader Focuses on Persons in the Group

Every person in the group is a primary factor for the group's existence. A person or process centered group demands a leader who is able to give of himself and enter into the life of each person in the group. The leader starts by looking at himself. What kind of a growth and change agent is he likely to be? Are persons of first concern to him? Is he in touch with himself so that he can lead others into a relationship with God and with fellow beings? What are his motives and goals in leading? Is he willing to risk showing the masks of his own self so others may know the kind of person he really is?

The leader brings to the group his own needs for personhood and yet he must also help others recognize and develop their personhood. Each one has an internal system and an external world which has to be brought into a unity. Each person is a feeling and thinking being who is able to appropriate and interpret God's purpose for life. Each one is a dynamic agent through which God's Holy Spirit effects change. They become deeply involved in the corporate

struggle to find meaning in the present. The leader enables each person to be himself, to accept his own limitations and to strive toward actualizing his potential for a fuller life through participative knowledge and interaction.

The leader engages every member of the group in depth communication, turning toward the other, sharing his doubts and pains as well as his faith and hope.

The essential action is that this one person steps forth and becomes a presence to us . . . realizing . . . his particular existence, even the encompassing of him, so that the situations common to him and oneself are experienced also from his side . . . He who turns to the other human being and opens himself to him receives the world in him. And when two say to one another with all that they are, "It is Thou" the Eternal Thou is present and between them.¹¹

The Leader Sets the Group Climate

Providing the conditions under which group members grow and change begin even before the first meeting. Room preparation and seating arrangement aid in creating the proper atmosphere. Chairs are placed in such a way that members face one another and the leader sits with the group.

The duration and number of sessions are made known ahead of time. Certain groups enter into a contract to attend all the sessions unless emergencies arise. Beginning and starting on time is stressed as a responsibility

¹¹Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1947), pp. 21 & 30.

toward each other. Groups seem to function better when timing and attendance of sessions are observed rather strictly.

The first meeting is a crucial encounter between leader and members. The leader has the initial task of establishing a group climate that is warm, supportive and accepting of every one who comes. He sets a friendly, informal atmosphere, introducing himself to those who come and getting to know each one by name if he does not know them as yet. Asking each member to write his name on a place card or on a tag big enough for others to read helps give each person a feeling of importance and also facilitates friendliness. When the group meeting starts, the very first effort is in making sure that every one knows the other, at least by name. The leader pays attention to the high anxiety level of the group, noting the feeling overtones or undertones which are more important than the verbalized communication.

The leader introduces basic ways of group life. He underscores the purpose for their coming together and stresses that the group determines the directions which they will take and that every member of the group is a participant in the quest. Everyone has something to contribute, each one is expected to support another's effort to change and confidentiality is upheld.

The Leader Facilitates Group Process

A group goes through developmental stages in the process of becoming a real group. Joseph W. Knowles presents five stages in growth or healing groups:

- 1) Getting started: anticipatory anxiety, leader dependency, and goal orientation.
- 2) Sharing information: getting acquainted and testing others.
- 3) Sharing feelings: experiencing acceptance and trust.
- 4) Confrontation and emotional encounter: emotionally corrective events.
- 5) Member autonomy and group interdependence: self-hood in community.¹²

Groups differ in the length of time they move from one stage to the next, depending upon the individuals that compose the group. The leader balances the group's expectations and images of him as their leader, realizing that the group will have to determine the rhythm and movement of the session. The leader serves as the midwife to the birth process of the group by helping the group through the travail of finding its identity and developing cohesiveness. He is the guide to the discovery or exploration process which may characterize the session. He plays different

¹²Joseph W. Knowles, *Group Counseling* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), p. 95.

roles, according to the situation on hand. He may be supportive, confronting or he may even lead by default, if only to make a group amend their dependency needs. He is a participant-observer, maintaining a balance between objectivity and subjectivity.

The leader pays attention to the contribution of every member and links the individual's thoughts to those of others. He reflects upon the group's communication, clarifies vague ideas or ambivalent feelings; summarizes or comments on the group's process and content as the meeting moves along or at the very end. He focuses on weakening the forces that resist rather than on pressuring the individual member to make a change.

The following process in person-centered groups have been observed:

- 1) Socializing and search for a significant theme or topic: the warm-up.
- 2) Rallying around a theme: group direction.
- 3) Theme exploration: group interaction
- 4) Theme exhaustion: group satiety.
- 5) Search for a new theme.¹³

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 94.

The Leader Uses Different Ways of Working with the Group

Using varied approaches in working with groups enhances learning and quickens relationships. Programmatic techniques may be used to get a group going, to find out what the members know, to discover what their feelings are, to obtain additional information, to clarify member objectives and group goals, to analyze and evaluate group process.

Four general kinds of methods are useful in a learning-sharing experience and within a method, varied techniques help produce the interaction between persons and bring about maximum use of resources:

- 1) Presentation Methods: One or more persons talk to the group. This may also be filmed or acted presentation.
- 2) Discussion Methods: The group, or some members, talk with one another or with resource persons.
- 3) Research and experimentation Methods: Group members engage in study or testing and bring their findings through discussion or through such presentation methods as reports or charts.
- 4) Demonstration and Practice Methods: One or more persons explain and demonstrate a skill. The group practices the skill.¹⁴

Presentation methods are best used when the group has a need for facts and information, for knowing different

¹⁴Dorothy LaCroix Hill, *Leading A Group* (Nashville: General Board of Education of the Methodist Church, Division of the Local Church, 1966), p. 72.

sides of a topic, for organizing thoughts around an issue, for ventilating feelings about a problem. A presenter, panel, film, role-play, socio-drama and psycho-drama are among the techniques used. This method goes better with other techniques like buzz or listening teams that afford the group a chance to respond to the presentation.

The discussion method is likely used when the topic is a felt problem or issue of the group and where thought and exchange of ideas have to be stimulated. Symposium, interview, circular response, question and answer and the use of an observer, recorder or reporter are among the techniques used in this method.

Research and experimentation are valuable when it contributes to the group's learning task and when members understand its purpose and are introduced to resource available to them. Other people outside the group, journals, commentaries, newspaper clippings and many other materials are referred to by the leader. Individual findings are always shared with the group in order to acknowledge the person's efforts to make this method purposeful.

Demonstration and practice methods are often used in workshops and laboratories in order to help a person learn by actual participation and involvement. This method takes more preparation, time and talent on the part of the leader yet it is one of the most exciting ways of enabling a

person to learn a new skill or to actualize some of his potential within the supporting climate of the group.

The Leader Involves the Group as A Whole

A good leader aims at enabling each person to become part of a whole; to achieve a sense of being joined with others in a corporate endeavor. The group is on a pilgrimage or a search and each one has a part in the planning, problem-solving and decision-making that takes place. The group formulates goals that are attainable and every member shares in working toward it. The productivity of the group goes high or low depending upon what is given and received by each member. The quality of group life is altered or affected by the attitudes and actions of every member.

The group begins to experience wholeness when the functions of the leaders are gradually taken over by the group. When the leadership is autocratic, members often do not participate fully nor do they express themselves honestly. When the leadership is "do-as-you-please" or *laissez faire*, members usually have no sense of direction and spend too much time floundering about.¹⁵ The person or process oriented leadership calls for involvement in the life of every member of the group and participation in the total group process. Each one assumes some responsibility for the group climate, for learning and action, for growth and change.

The group attains wholeness when members affect and influence each other. Gestures, words, feelings and actions elicit response from one another. The group feels a dynamic force in motion resulting from interpersonal interaction. They confront each other with the problems and realities of depth-relationships. They strive to remove the barriers to genuine encounter with each other and with God.

A group can be demonic if it allows members to isolate themselves from the realities of living in the outside world. The group becomes an end in itself when individuals are not helped to take their respective roles in society. Such a group becomes a liability than an asset. Groups are a means of helping persons find themselves and discover ways of relating to fellowbeings and consequently to God. Within a climate of acceptance and concern they face their particular predicaments and together they seek ways with which to solve them. The group becomes a unified whole, enabling persons to live creatively and responsibly.

III. SUGGESTED FAMILY LIFE GROUPS

Stages in the family life span as suggested in Chapter IV are made the basis for the following proposed groups in the church. It is a means of reaching persons

and families in different stages of life. Every member of the church would fall under one of these categories and may be invited to this adventure. Every person can contribute and learn in a small group engaged in discovering themselves and intent on fully experiencing their becoming. Those who fall in the same stage of family life naturally share common problems and hopefully, have ways of coping with them. Coming together would increase awareness of what others are going through and makes the give and take of experience quite intense. Husbands and wives who belong to these groups may find sustenance in group identity and cohesiveness.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to suggest a curriculum for the different groups although the groupings in themselves give an index of the concerns that may present themselves. Person centered groups start where the people are in their perceptions, feelings, attitudes and knowledge. The group itself has to cultivate sensitivity to the "teachable moments"¹⁶ and the crucial points of group life. The group is to minister to every member in his particular situation.

Family life groups may become the initiating centers for discussion of issues in the community that call for the

¹⁶Robert J. Havighurst, *Developmental Tasks and Education* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1952), p. 5.

cooperation of families. These groups may also be the nerve-centers for reflecting upon happenings in homes in the community and for supporting, stemming or alleviating these events, depending upon the kind of action it warrants. The groups may serve as the connecting links to community and inter-church agencies which are engaged in the same services.

Beginning Families

1. Young Couples Group: For newlyweds who do not yet expect a baby. Marital enrichment may be the purpose of such a group. In many churches this may be combined with the next group.

2. Expectant Parents Group: For husband and wife teams who anticipate parenthood.

3. Young Parents Group: For parents with infants and children who are not yet in nursery school.

4. Pre-baptismal Counseling Group: For parents who are presenting their children for baptism in the church. This is very much needed in the Philippines where dedications and baptisms are often used to expand the family's economic and political affiliations via sponsors who are of high standing in the community or the country. Infant baptism or dedication is a corporate act of fellowship where the parents, sponsors and the whole congregation take on the responsibility of bringing up a child in the Christian

faith and life.

Families with Pre-School Children

1. Nursery Parents' Group: In local churches with a weekday nursery school, meetings are usually held for parents of nursery children. Mothers may meet while their children attend class. However, there are parents who cannot afford or who do not send their children to nursery school and they may be reached through the church school where most of the parents bring their children.

2. Kindergarten Parents' Group: The same arrangement as with Nursery Parents may be followed. Both groups may be combined in smaller churches. Study and work may be the main components of both groups. Many parents learn from making toys and play equipment for this age-group which may be used in the classroom and which give them ideas of constructive playthings at home.

Families with Elementary School Children

1. Family enrichment through study or modified therapy groups are vital for parents of this life-span. Parents of primary-age children (Grades I-III) may compose one group and those of junior age (or Grades IV-VI) may be another group. In many local churches a functional way to divide the groups would be in accordance with the church school elementary classes: Younger Primary (Grades I & II);

Older Primary (Grades III & IV) and Junior (Grades V & VI).

2. Parent-Child Group: This may be for sharing concerns and for working and playing together as families.

3. This is the best age group for ministering to families through church celebrations like Advent, Christmas, Easter or Thanksgiving. Involving families in the worship services by giving all the members of a family a part in the leadership of worship and conducting all-family activities in the church have tremendous possibilities at this stage of family life.

Groups for Families with High School Children

1. Groups for Parents of Young Adolescents: This is mainly for parents of high school students. However, parents of teenagers who are not in high school may need more sharing and guidance in growing with their teenager in this difficult transition between childhood and adulthood. In bigger churches where high school students are divided into Junior Highers (1st and 2nd years) and Senior Highers (3rd and 4th years), parents may prefer the same grouping.

2. Groups for Teenagers: The church school classes or youth fellowship may be turned into self-discovery groups for periods of time like Advent and Lent when these young people can turn in on themselves and tune in to each other in order to know more about the problems and opportunities that are shared by them. Adult advisors or

guarantors for these groups should be couples who are open to new ideas and innovations in the work and witness of the church.

3. Joint Parent-Youth Group: This would offer rich opportunities for in-depth dialogue and group therapy. Role-playing may be a very effective approach to such a group.

Launching Families

1. Modified Therapy Group for Parents: Fathers and mothers of launching families are usually at the stage where their teenager starts leaving home to go to college or where one of the children gets married. It is very difficult finance-wise and emotion-wise for many parents. Coming together for sustenance and healing may be very suitable for this group.

2. College Student Groups: The Youth Fellowship or the Student Christian Movement offers many possibilities for self-other growth and fulfillment. Study and action groups are often the channels wherein such experiences are realized.

3. Growth Groups for Single Young Adults: For unmarried professionals who are looking for a group where they can experience a sense of belonging and intimacy.

4. Pre-marital Counseling Group: For couples who are planning for marriage. Belonging to a group may be a

better and faster means for engaged couples to know each other's ways of relating to people and to be realistic about their own assets and limitations.

Families in the Middle Years

1. Modified Therapy Groups: For parents who range in ages from thirty-five to their fifties. Some of the parents may still be sending children of various ages to school while others are experiencing the empty nest and are grandparents. The multitudinous expectations and roles of the middle years in the family, one's work, church and civic affiliations necessitate renewal and healing groups.

2. Unmarried Adults' Group: For those who are unmarried and need to consider alternative in their life-world. Singleness opens many options to a person. It may mean dedicating one's life to something that outlasts it, investing in other people's lives or in institutional avenues of working for the common good.

Families in the Older Years

1. Depth Bible Study and/or Prayer Groups: Both groups are commended to all of the family life stages but a heterogeneous grouping in terms of ages and occupations of persons engaged in Bible study and prayer may be very significant for older people. Giving them a chance to be heard and to hear the younger generation might make a

difference in their esteem of themselves.

2. Fellowship and Sharing Groups: Older people benefit from sharing each other's experiences and interests. Through such a group one may deal with the problems of integrity versus despair, the simplification of life and the threat of death. Group participation in service activities in church and community also provide avenues for maximizing senior citizenship skills.

IV. SUMMARY

Practical application of the personal-relational model of family life can take place through small groups in the community of faith who engage themselves in the serious business of growing up and living together as Christians. Person or process oriented groups offer rich possibilities for participation, mutual need satisfaction, two-way communication, interaction, authenticity, integrity and immediacy. These groups call for leaders who put priority on people, generate a warm and responsive group climate, facilitate the group process, use educative and instructive ways of working and relate the group to the larger context of living in the here and now. The entire youth and adult membership of the Church may be served and mobilized through small groups. Groupings according to family life stages are proposed as a means of gathering

together people who are confronted with the problems and crisis in their particular period of life and who struggle toward growth and change.

CHAPTER VI

PRACTICAL APPLICATION: FAMILY GROUP THERAPY AND COUNSELING

Conjoint therapy with families gradually came into its own during the second half of this century. It was related to the study of family pathology and treatment, particularly of schizophrenics. Family therapy and counseling makes functional use of various disciplines: art such as dance, drama and painting; individual and group psychology; sociology; cultural anthropology and the physical sciences, from which the systems concept is derived. It has also made use of various approaches particularly those of the communication theorists who are concerned with verbal and nonverbal ways of expression and response; the role theorists who postulate the effects of role expectations and formation in the individual; the ego theorists who endeavor to show the relation of intra-psychic development to interpersonal relations and the game theorists who concern themselves with the web of relationships in which people involve themselves.

I. CONCEPTS IN CONJOINT FAMILY THERAPY

Treating the Family As A Whole

Jay Haley lists three general arguments for treating the family as a group:

1. Often individual therapy has failed with a type of patient or a particular patient and it is argued that his family is preventing change and should be treated.
2. When individual treatment is slow, difficult and subject to relapses, it is similarly argued that the environment of the patient is inhibiting change.
3. Appearance of distress and symptoms in other family members when the patient improves raises questions about the responsibility of a therapist to other family members.¹

Nathan Ackerman emphasizes the treatment of the entire family from the start. He believes that the family is an organism whose dynamic or dysfunction is better observed in the members' ways of relating to one another. He focuses on the immediate problems that distress the family rather than recalling their past experiences.²

John Elderkin Bell brings out the advantages of working with the family group: the family does not have to be constructed as a group, the group exists before, during and after therapy. Any change introduced is likely to have direct and immediate effect on the family. The family also differs from group therapy because of the nature of

¹Jay Haley, "Whither Family Therapy?" *Family Process*, I (March 1962), pp. 69-70.

²Nathan W. Ackerman, "Emergence of Family Psychotherapy on the Present Scene," in Morris I. Stein (ed.), *Contemporary Psychotherapies* (New York: Free Press, 1961), pp. 228-244.

relationship and the problems that exist within a family.³

Goals of Family Group Therapy

Edward J. Carroll offers three goals of family therapy as contrasted to the traditional one-to-one treatment:

Family.

1. Attaining effective functioning regardless of individual pathology.
2. Each individual comes to understand not only something about himself but also comes to a sympathetic and sometimes deep understanding of the other members of the family.
3. Establishment of healthy interaction as an outgoing part of treatment.

One-to-One

1. Analysis and cure of illness.
2. The individual is helped to understand himself.
3. Exploration, insight into and relief from inhibiting conflicts with the expectation that full reintegration and healthy functioning will follow the treatment.⁴

Howard Clinebell, Jr. lists the following goals:

1. Re-opening the lines of intrafamilial communication so that feelings, wishes, goals and values can be discussed.

³John Elderkin Bell, "A Theoretical Position for Family Group Therapy," *Family Process*, III (March 1964), p. 184.

⁴Edward J. Carroll, "Family Therapy" Some Observations and Comparisons," *Family Process*, 1966), pp. 3-4.

2. Interrupting the self-perpetuating spiral of mutual need--deprivation and attack.
3. Increasing the family members' awareness of the roles which various ones play and are expected by others to play in their interaction.
4. Becoming aware of their essential interdependence and identity as a family.
5. Having practice in thinking together about sources of pain and pleasure in family interaction.
6. Beginning to experiment with more flexible and mutually satisfying roles and with more responsible ways of relating.⁵

Bell cites about the same main goals: Changing the structure and functions of the family group by relating the family to the group, working on family tasks through the identification of family problems, analyzing problems and factors that create them and the development of solutions to the problems.⁶

There are many ways by which these goals are achieved: some are oriented to individuals within the family, some work with the primary patient and a parent, usually the mother and others concentrate on the couple. Conjoint family therapy prefers to work with the entire

⁵Howard J. Clinbell, Jr., *Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966), p. 124.

⁶J. E. Bell, *Family Group Therapy* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), pp. 4-5.

family. This section is mainly based on the Satir model of family therapy and her ideas provide the structure for both therapy and counseling with the entire family.⁷

Spotlighting the Marriage Relationship

Satir puts the focus on the marriage instead of the "identified patient" or the member who carries the symptoms of family dysfunction. She maintains that families usually have a member of the family on whom the conflicts and stresses of marital pain has centered. This person has taken on himself the burden of keeping the family on the go by centering on himself, a way of sending SOS signals about the family's hurts. Pains come from unfulfilled marital relationships and so in therapy the marital transaction becomes the object of attention. The marital relationship is the locus in which other relationships in the family are formed.

Low self-esteem. In analyzing the marriage relationship, the therapist tries to discover the image of oneself that each mate has. In pained marriages, mates usually have low self-esteem stemming from growing-up conflicts about their own worth in relation to their respective parents, siblings and people especially of the opposite

⁷Virginia Satir, *Conjoint Family Therapy* (Palo Alto: Science and Behaviour Books, 1967).

sex. Ghosts from his past run the show for him. He has not learned to translate past experiences into new and positive ways of living. Yet he has high hopes and expects so much from others at the same time that he distrusts people and is anxious about events that come up. He wants an extension of himself in the other. Being a "low-pot" mate leads to dysfunctional parenting which also produces dysfunctional families.

Differentness. This means the recognition of individuality in every person. Low self-esteem and lack of trust in the other lead to the threat of another person's differentness, especially the mate's. There follows an inability to strike some balance between what the other wants, thinks and can carry through. Disagreements are not tolerated and lead to covert and ambiguous communication. This vicious cycle goes back to the lack of self-esteem and trust. When such people marry, integration with the mate is hard to achieve and constructive parenting will be most difficult to attain.

Maturation. Is the mate in charge of himself, able to make decisions and accept responsibilities with regard to himself, his spouse and siblings and the world about him? Satir describes maturation in terms of a functional person-who is able to manifest himself clearly to others; is in

touch with signals from within; behaves toward another person as different from himself, starts from the basic fact that his spouse is of another sex; considers differentness as an opportunity to learn and grow, accepts responsibility for what he thinks, feels and says without denying others their own feelings and opinions and openly negotiates the giving and receiving of meaning between himself and others. On the other hand, a dysfunctional person sends out conflicting messages, is unable to perceive the here and now, lets the ghost of his past linger on and lacks communication facilities for handling conflicts and stresses constructively.⁸

Concept of Family Homeostasis.

Satir uses the concept of homeostasis as a starting point for the rationale behind family therapy. The family acts so as to achieve a balance in relationships. Family interaction has a bearing on the symptoms of the identified patient. Along with this is the interpersonal nature of illness which points to the mental illness of a member as symptomatic of family pathology, narrowing down to pathogenic relationships in the nuclear family. Some therapists posit that malfunction in schizophrenics may be traced

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 92.

back to the grandparents of the identified patient. Even though the life-problems and personality-functioning of adults are distinct from the child's there is a close correlation in the emotional integration of these primary relations. Wholesome psychic interplay with these members help channel emotional responses, control anxiety, conflict and the decision of fight or flight. Patterns of reality testing and training for social responsibility also happens in the interpersonal level.

Concept of Family Interaction.

When a child comes into the world of parents (or even a parent) who is "low-pot" then trouble is compounded. For the child has immediate needs of his own and the parents are expected to teach the child his roles--socially accepted ways of relating, to cope with his environment and to communicate effectively. "Low-pot" parents often fall back on the family for the love and closeness they cannot find in the outside world and so often it fails because the mates are disillusioned about each other and both try to concentrate on the child. Satir believes that transaction in the family is a shifting two-person relationship with the third member in the role of observer. This constant formation of dyads necessitates the need for participation and response from all of the members rather than concentrating the flow of interaction on just one dyad in the family.

Each parent's desire to extend himself in the child brings about conflicting mandates on the child. Parents vie for the child's favor and the "left out" parent takes it out on the "chosen parent" and the child. Very often the parents use the child to "cross monitor" the marital conflicts. The child gets "cut up" inside as he tries to stay on the side of both parents. He needs both parents and he desires to keep the family at all costs, whether it be by sacrificing his own growth or victimizing his own parents if only to keep them anxious about him. He feels that this is a life and death relationship. Rejection, disagreement, disapproval, dislike, blackmail or conditional love are like little or big deaths.

In families with more than one child, one of them may be the identified parent throughout, often depending on chance characteristics of physicality, mentality or temperament; or on one's sex, age or position in the sibling relationship; or the child who is always at home when the marital strain comes on may become the IP.

Concept of Individual Needs.

Satir refers to needs all children have such as physical comfort, continuity in relationship, learning to respond to others, learning to structure the world and esteem himself as a masterful person, able to take charge of himself if validated by at least one parent. Parent

validation includes recognition of developmental stages, enabling them to be a part of their world and the world at large without thinking he is at the center of it, giving him opportunities to use newly-acquired abilities including the making of decisions, forming and maintaining relationships even if it means failure and disappointment at times. If only one parent validates the child, his learning will be difficult although growth can still take place. Being a masterful person includes sexual identity gained mostly from parents who serve as models of a functional and gratifying male-female transaction.

Concept of Systems.

Everyone operates in multiple relationship systems. The intrapsychic is supported by the interpersonal. Self-concepts and self-images stem from patterns of relating which we encounter. Possibilities for self-actualization may be thwarted because of a limited context. But the self's potential may also be explored and changed to open present and future possibilities. Hence the individual needs to understand the part he and other members play in the family system and to realize how his intrapsychic as well as interpersonal behaviour affects him and them. The therapist himself is involved in the therapeutic system and sets the example of growth in terms of transparency and honesty in the confrontations between the family and him.

He is also flexible in techniques and approaches, always on the lookout for that which may expedite the patient's learning and growth.

Concept of Process.

In therapy the process which occurs in all human relationships particularly of the family is what the therapist seeks to understand and change constructively, with the entire family participating in the ongoing drama. It deals with the "how" of a transaction, focusing on the carrying out of the activity rather than the activity as such, enabling each member to be an active change agent. The basic process is the encounter between two people at a particular moment in time. It is concerned with the here and now and stresses the importance of helping each person adapt new patterns of relating and reinforcing his confidence and esteem in carrying through the tasks or roles that are assigned to him as part of the family unit.

Bell has set forth how the therapist effects change in the process:

1. In all social groups, and particularly the family, the communication and interaction is structured within certain operational limits that produce stereotyped patterns of reactions between family members and a restriction on the permissible ranges of individual behaviour.
2. Most older children and their parents have available to them potential patterns of behaviour beyond those that they use in the family.

3. The therapist is a community figure in relation to whom the individual member may show behaviour that extends beyond what he normally reveals in the family.
4. In response to the new patterns revealed, the rest of the family members must revise their stereotypes about the family member, must re-evaluate him, must respond to him with new attitudes, and new accommodations of their own behaviour.
5. Having developed new modes of interacting, supported by mutual commitment that they are better and should be continued, the family consolidates these new patterns.⁹

The above sounds very encouraging and may be a useful technique to a therapist or counselor although he also has to be prepared to shift if the process does not present itself in this orderly manner.

Concept of Communication

Communication is conducted on two levels: the denotative (literal content) and the metacommunicative (message about the message). On the latter level there comes the request or demand to be validated by others. Yet, indirect communication is used to camouflage requests and prevent embarrassment in case the request is refused. Hence the incongruent messages, where verbal and nonverbal communication links, are contradictory. Incongruent messages put added burdens on the receiver as these need checking out.

⁹Bell, "A Theoretical Position. . .," p. 12.

Senders vary in their ability to send messages and receivers also differ in their ability to perceive the needs and wishes of the other so communication gets bogged down. This often results in a double bind. Of course checking out can take place but because man has a built-in potential for self-defeat, he "lowers the boom" on the other and declares war. Thus a negative-feeding-cycle is perpetuated. In therapy this cycle is interrupted, meanings are checked out and messages, either verbal or nonverbal are observed, pointed out and enhanced positively.

II. STYLES IN CONJOINT FAMILY THERAPY

Beginning Sessions.

There are various ways used by different therapists in conducting the beginning sessions. John Bell meets with the parents of the primary patient during the first orientation-interview. He aims at finding out their perception of the patient, particularly what they think is wrong with him. He explains to them why they need to be seen as a family and asks their cooperation in allowing the child to talk and to let his hostilities out. The second interview is child (or children) centered. The child is encouraged to say what his complaints are and his parents are helped to see what their child thinks of them. Bell then concentrates on the father-mother interaction and then shifts to

the siblings. He helps them plan for some family activity and gains support for activities of the patient away from his family. If the children and/or the parents can be transparent from the start this would be a good sign for fast therapy.¹⁰

Satir encourages every therapist to find his own unique way of handling therapy. She prefers an informal stance during the interviews and yet is most attentive to the verbal and nonverbal cues going on.

The arrangement for interview. A member of the family, usually the wife calls for an appointment to meet the therapist. This time may be utilized to get some identifying information regarding the family. The therapist gets introduced to the family, who makes it up, what their ages are. Then the idea of having the entire family is also taken up, knowing that most families usually send the IP with the mother only. The therapist points out the importance of the husband as a parent who should speak for himself regarding their child.

The first interview. In meeting the family for the first time, certain assumptions may be made: there is "pain" in the functioning of that family; someone "hurts"

¹⁰Bell, *Family Group Therapy*, pp. 9-20.

the most in the interrelationship; self-esteem and perception of other members are "low-pot" and there are barriers to their communication processes. Clues may be observed by the way members of the family walk into the room, where they sit, who each member looks at when talking, who speaks most or least and how they communicate to each other.

The therapist asks every member how they happened to come for therapy, what they expect to happen and what they hope to accomplish in the sessions. He also sets boundaries in terms of the possible number of therapy sessions. He explains that families have operating procedures which they may not even know about and he wants to know what these are. He wants to know what each one does when "pain" is seen in one member of the family. Then he asks each one what he identifies as "pain" in the family. The parents usually refer to the IP and so the therapist listens to their version of the appearance of symptoms, how they tried to deal with it and what happened as time went along. Such questions allow parents to tell the therapist that they have tried to do what they can. Good intentions are brought up and the threat of blame is decreased. Emphasis is also placed on the here and now.

Taking a Family Life Chronology.

Satir maintains that structure is important during the first two sessions and does this through a family life

chronology. This enables the therapist to get clues as to how the pain shows itself, how the mates have coped with the problem, how models from their own backgrounds have influenced their marital and parental roles, how certain events, particularly crisis affect them. Chronology-taking also helps provide the structure through which re-education may take place and the therapist serves as a model for receiving and checking out communication techniques and meanings.

The essential parts of the family, according to Satir, are the adults (male and female) and the children. The barest essential would be the husband and wife and one child. She considers siblings up to age 21 as children due to their inability to make financial contracts. After 21 the child is treated as an adult and comes to the interviews right from the start. With younger children, Satir usually meets the marital pair for at least two sessions before the children come. She varies the length of time for interviews with shorter sessions for families with young children to "marathon" sessions where a weekend or longer may be spent with one or several families. Varying the context helps the therapist observe the interaction. Families may be seen in the office, in their homes, in their place of work or wherever marital or family transactions transpire.

Chronology starts with the mates because family therapy

is focused on the mates who are the family architects. By dealing with the mates, the therapist also establishes the fact that the husband and wife have a relationship of their own. The therapist concentrates on facts first and works on feelings relating to this cast of characters gradually. The therapist always relates perceptions to time, place and event.

Chronology-taking should be a time to remember the pleasures this family has had and the therapist makes a strong bid for these times. The handling of differentness is also brought out as the chronology is taken. In eliciting information from each mate, the therapist weaves back and forth between them to keep the information at about the same chronological time. All information which pertain to both of the mates are cross-referred to enable the family and the therapist to ventilate their own responses.

The therapist checks out expectations, hopes and fears each mate communicates to the other. He points out inconsistencies and helps them see some of the uncommunicated hopes and fears harbored by each one. He refers to their past models and brings out the need for clearer communication between husband and wife. Above all, he helps them see that they need not be tied to their past ghosts since the present is what they have with them.

The therapist works at enabling the children to

to communicate their perceptions of the family and helps the parents receive their children's views. Children are usually protective of the family and threatened by the presence of their parents and give answers with great care. The therapist encourages the child to give his own reactions and interprets for him, "Maybe you are afraid that you will hurt Mom and Dad if you let them know that you see their pain."¹¹

At the end of the interview, the therapist instills hope: "I have the feeling that we can come to some new ideas about all this."¹² Chronology-taking differs from one family to another, depending upon the responses and attitudes of the family members.

Working with Children in Family Therapy.

Some therapists prefer not to include small children in therapy treatment. Satir sees marital pairs only when their children are under four years of age although she still wants to see their children for at least two sessions. If the family is very disturbed, she sees the entire family from the start.

The parents are prepared for the session with their

¹¹Satir, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

¹²*Ibid.*

children. The therapist asks them how they would broach the matter to their children and reassures them that a child acts like a child. In the actual interview, Satir generally waits for the parents to do the disciplining. She sets limits relating to the session, like leaving the room only once, listening to whomever is talking, speaking for himself, leaving things in the office as they are.

Individuality is reinforced by calling each child's name. The therapist differentiates them according to birth order and sex. She repeats the gist of a child's answer to show she is listening. Questions are therapeutic and help children clarify their perceptions and opinions. Questions from children are also dealt with. She asks about the activities of each child. She reminds the members that they have differences of interests and even have disagreements and can feel anger toward each other. She asks what make the parents angry and how each one decides on what to do when the parents do not agree. The therapist introduces the idea of each one letting the other know when he is pleased by what is done as that often is neglected in favor of getting on each other's nerves.

A diagnosis of family dysfunction often shows up the following:

- Parents are abdicating from parenting.
- Parents are acting as siblings with their children, vying for attention from the other mate.
- Children are "parenting" their parents.

Children are acting as "ersatz" mates of their parents
 Children are successfully challenging appropriate
 parental authority.¹³

Family "homeostasis" is precarious when:

Nothing seems to turn out right.
 There never seems to be enough of anything to go
 around.
 Any relationship between any two members in the family
 makes the others feel left out.
 Evil motives are attributed to everyone.
 Everyone is feeling cheated.¹⁴

The therapist enables children and parents to express
 their real feelings and to communicate overtly. He inter-
 venes when covert communication takes place. He supports
 parental responsibility and helps the husband and wife to
 restructure their family relationship around a strengthened
 marital transaction.

Role of the Therapist.

The role of the therapist has been spelled out in
 various ways. Nathan Ackerman emphasizes what he considers
 important:

The clinician in face-to-face relations . . . has the
 opportunity to draw certain observations as to the
 make-up of the respective personalities, the adaptation
 of their personalities to family roles, and the pre-
 ferred modes of action of the family as a family.¹⁵

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 151

¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁵N. W. Ackerman, "Further Comments on Family Psycho-
 therapy," pp. 249-253.

He partly permits himself to be drawn into the center of the family disturbance . . . Sometimes it is necessary to be a kind of referee, controller, or balance wheel. Sometimes it is important to move around the family to provide emotional support for one member or another whose self-esteem is badly damaged. Sometimes the therapist must take a particular member down a notch. The role of the therapist is an active role. He can back up one part of the family now and later turn about and back up another part. If he tries to appear neutral, the members of the family won't trust or believe him.¹⁶

Bell mentions the supportive role of the therapist as important:

He creates openings for the individual to speak, he puts ideas, wishes, feelings into the words, he seeks to counteract blockages in verbal communication, he provides support through various forms of interpretation: reflective, connective, reconstructive, normative.¹⁷

Satir brings out the active role of the therapist all throughout her book. She is the leader in the therapy process. She creates a setting by which each family-member can take stock of himself in relation to the other. By having a flexible structure, she assures the family that she wants to find out how they may be helped to face the present and the future. She helps the mates see how past models have influenced expectations of his own role, his spouse and siblings. She engenders communication by asking questions, checking out facts, expressing genuine feelings,

¹⁶Ackerman, "Emergence of Family . . .," pp. 242-244.

¹⁷Bell, *Family Group Therapy*, p. 44f.

pointing out double-level messages, relating feelings to facts. She helps restore the patient's feeling of accountability, of being in charge of himself, enabling each one to give and to get from other members of the family. She inspires positive qualities in the family: confidence rather than fear, direction instead of anomie, acceptance in lieu of rejection, self-esteem which instills esteem in others. She accents the pleasures the family has had and can enter into and encourages each one to participate in significant interactions within the family and consequently, in the larger community to which they belong.

Terminating Treatment.

Right at the start the therapist announces that the sessions are aimed toward the wholesome functioning of the family and will have a definite end. The therapist believes that changes take place in interpersonal processes. She is intimately involved in the growing edges and expedites learning through techniques that enhance a person's knowledge and sense of worth. Satir uses the senses (e.g. holding hands, looking into the eyes), drama, dance or games in order to provide new growth experiences for the family or the individual.

Satir offers criteria for terminating therapy which this writer has chosen to recast according to individual, marital and familial tasks:

1. Individual: when he has self-esteem which enables him to attain maturity, when he can accept himself and accept how others see him, when he can make his own choices, when he is open to new ways of viewing life, when he tries to learn through practice.

2. Marital: when each spouse can be direct: in giving and receiving and interpreting messages; when each spouse can acknowledge differentness, individual needs, separateness and accountability; when each spouse can be clear by asking questions and making statements which are congruent and aimed toward evoking the best in the other person.

3. Familial: When one member can tell another how he perceives himself; when one member can tell another his hopes, fears and expectations, when they can interpret hostility, when they can communicate clearly, when family members can complete transactions, ask, be congruent to each other.¹⁸

In a nutshell, treatment is terminated when each one in the family can say, "I love you," "I like you," "I dig you."

III. IMPLICATIONS FOR FAMILY COUNSELING

Family group therapy based on the Satir model has tremendous possibilities in local church counseling. Many of those who go to the minister for counseling have family problems. There is informal family counseling going on among members of the church as families share their problems and seek solutions to such problems among themselves or as one member of a family seeks the opinion or advice of another

¹⁸Satir, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

family. The church will be of more help to families if ordained and lay ministers are afforded training in family counseling.

The family is a natural setting for counseling in that it is already a constituted group and the problems that have come up in that group emanates from the family members. Healing may be effected right from the first session and in the continuing involvement of that family in day to day living. It is also easier to ask husband to family counseling sessions when he is made to realize that they have a place in the family that no one else can fill and that his participation counts much toward the healthy functioning of his family. The possibilities for short-term counseling are also attendant to a setting where checking out of perceptions and meanings are effected right there and then and in their daily interaction.

Family group counseling upholds the holistic approach to family living. The family is an organism where ideally, all the parts are in relationship and where roles are operative in functioning as a whole. The family is "an organismic network with complex social, economic and psychological interdependencies."¹⁹ Ackerman has shown that a family possesses the qualities of an organism: it has

¹⁹Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., *Mental Health Through Christian Community* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1965), p.189

functional unity, it is a living, developing process; and it has a natural life history."²⁰ The growth of the family member with problems is related to the environment of that person in the home. Often a hospitalized member gets well but relapses when sent back into the family situation. Or, other members of the family get distressed when the "identified patient" becomes better because the family's equilibrium has been upset.

Family group counseling focuses on the marital pair. It stresses the importance of self-esteem, trust in the other, acceptance of differentness and congruent communication as basic in functional maturation. With this comes a mate's capacity to learn, change and achieve further development. This is of particular value to family life in the Philippines. The husband-wife relationship has been taken for granted in favor of parent-child interdependencies. The symbols of love have been portrayed via father-son or mother-child roles. Husband-wife relationships are hardly mentioned, possibly because of the erotic association given to man-woman symbolisms. Basing the multi-dimensional family interaction on the transaction between the husband and wife who are builders of the family will be

²⁰Nathan W. Ackerman, *The Psychodynamics of Family Life* (New York: Basic Books, 1958), p. 15.

a real confrontation to these two adults. In the Philippines where divorce is not granted, many couples stay together for the sake of the children. In fact, each one of the mates feel this is a martyr's role and many have not been made to face up to the traumatization this causes them and their children. Then when the children leave, the couple find no meaning to their life together.

Family group therapy points to basic needs of every individual in the family. Every child needs both of his parents and will use all means to keep them both in the family. In fact, if one of the parents die, a child will look for substitute figures to compensate for this loss. The child needs to be recognized and trusted as a person in his own right and to be related to important others throughout his life span.

Establishing better lines and breaking down barriers of communication is one of the systems that may be used in family counseling. Covert communication should be made overt, concepts and meanings clarified, verbal and non-verbal cues taken into account. Counselors should be facilitators of gut-level communication. They should know the concerns and problems of people in relation to becoming a part of the redemptive community where love and forgiveness are to be given and received.

This kind of counseling requires living in the here

and now rather than looking back into the ghosts of one's past. A family life chronology is taken if only to enable the family and the counselor to see how their present roles and functions are colored by their past experiences and how they can restructure their perceptions and perspectives and put it to work. There are less transference responses because of the interactive process between family members to the realities of the situation at hand. It is also action-oriented. Some of the sessions may be given over to planning family tasks (by the members of the family only, with the counselor observing and commenting on the process). It may be planning for a short trip or the division of labor in the family but the idea is to provide opportunities for the family to have fun together or to work together. The counselor also reminds the family of better times they have had and that "pain" may be alleviated if all of them work toward it.

Family group counseling offers opportunities for the church to help families in shaping their goals, meeting crisis and conflicts, making decisions, solving problems and choosing paths of action. The family also has to be helped to relate to the larger community where their sense of family identity and need for belonging may be put to the test and may find fulfillment.

The local church has the resources of the Christian

faith to offer to the family: the dynamics of prayer, the reading of Scriptures and other books written by people who have faced similar conflicts and tensions they have, the receiving of the sacraments, the fellowship of the believers, the assurance that each person and every family is of worth before God. He confronts every man with his creatureliness and finiteness but he also offers each one the reality of incarnate love and new life in Jesus Christ.

IV. SUMMARY

Family group therapy and counseling provides the healing thrust in carrying out the personal-relational model. Therapy is done by trained ministers and laymen and the church provides or avails herself of the knowledge and services that such people render. Counseling is a function that the local church has done through the minister and laymen who have the gifts for meeting the needs of troubled persons and families. More can be accomplished as churchmen begin to understand the values of therapy and counseling.

Conjoint work with families emphasizes the holistic approach to family living, focuses on the marital pair, points to basic needs of individuals, enhances communication, provides opportunity to offer the resources of the Christian faith and relates the family to the work and

witness of the covenant community in the world. Surely, the local church has a mission to bring reconciliation and renewal in families!

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

This final chapter is an effort to weave together the warp and woof of the personal-relational model of family life education. It advances some understanding of the intrapsychic and the interpersonal aspects of family living as it pertains to the "New Filipino." It supports the importance of the family in the interpretation and translation of the personal-relational style of life. It suggests ways in which the family's growth and healing may become an integral part of the work and witness of Protestant churches in the Philippines.

I. WHY A PERSONAL-RELATIONAL MODEL FOR FAMILIES?

Families are the basic units of society and the vital units within the churches in the Philippines. Family life education received impetus after World War II due to the social problems brought on by misery, poverty, alienation and anomie. The social scene continues to shift with the issues gradually focusing on the great ferment in personal and social modes of living. The "New Filipino" is faced with the problems of wholeness and relatedness in a culture that puts priority to kin and ritual ties over against individual autonomy or family solidarity. Families

in the Philippines are the main force in shaping the personal core of the individual and in wielding political and economic influence in the community and country. Therefore, it is in the realm of family living that the personal-relational model is intended.

The family has the responsibility to lead every individual within its axis into self-actualization. The family also has the bigger obligation to involve every person within it into responsible transaction and interaction in society. Both of these functions call for the person who is able to enter into his own self if only to go out of himself. The personal-relational foci maintains the inseparability of the person from relationships which start with his family, extends into the community of faith and encompasses the broader aspects of community, national and international life.

II. PERSONAL-RELATIONAL CONCEPTS

The personal-relational model is based on the person in his relations. Relationships start with God who as Creator, Sovereign and Redeemer initiates life and love to every person and to all peoples. He calls each one to personal relatedness with Him and through Him with one another. God confronts man with the choice between a life of response to God's saving activity in the world or in the

absurd search for self devoid of its relations. God calls man into a covenant relationship in a community of men who have responded to God's confrontation and upon whom God has established His identity. But man suffers from anxiety, despair and finiteness. He rebels against his Maker and he antagonizes his fellow-men. He desires to be only for himself. God brought love incarnate into the world in Jesus Christ. By this mighty act, God disclosed the power of His love to man. Christ restored man's relationship to God and brought reconciliation between man and man. The early Christians experienced divine love through the Holy Spirit abiding in their midst. They became a fellowship of those empowered to witness to the love of God and to be the agents of His redemptive work. In Christ man has also received his freedom. He is no longer a slave to his own creaturehood. He is a son of God who is free to act in response to God's offer of forgiveness and love. He becomes a participant in God's continuing activity to bring about love, justice and meaning in the world.

Man is called by God to selfhood-in-community. The self is formed in relationship with others. It is deformed or transformed through the responses that it gives or receives. The self has to be in communication with other selves, responding to them as persons of worth before God and with rights and responsibilities in personal and

corporate life. The "I" has to be in dialogue with the "Thou," entering into his hurts and pains as well as sharing in his joys and sorrows. "There is no such thing as self, only self-in-relation. There is no life without the hyphen! To be human beings we 'hyphen' with other human beings."¹ Man has to enable others to grow toward maturity and wholeness and to become a community of persons and families who are joined in a relationship of involvement and concern. He has to participate in the ordering of love and justice in society, acting in accord with God's purpose for the individual person and the universal community. Man in relation to another has to experience the reconciling power of God's Spirit in the encounter and engagement of fellow-beings. Every man knows that he has to continually contend with his selfish inward desires and deep-seated animosities against other men. Yet every man is called to receive God's offer of grace and to be the channel of restored relationships among men. This may come about in commitment to a community of faith in which the realities of man's being and the immediacies of his becoming are held in creative tension. Selfhood in community may be gained in the offering of oneself to the mission of

¹Ross Snyder, *On Becoming Human* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1967), p. 84.

the people of God in "the increase among men of the love of God and neighbor."²

Man is destined to be of personal worth and to participate in the vital processes that contribute toward wholeness for himself and for humankind. He was created with the unique human capacities for self-awareness, self-knowledge and self-transcendence. He has an inward core of which compels him to find meaning and purpose to life and which enables him to respond to others. He can make value judgements, interpret events and determine some form of action or expression. He can view himself both as subject and object and search for ultimate concern or meaning which he cannot find in himself. But his vitality, creativity and intelligence can also bring him alienation, despair and groundlessness. The Christian faith teaches that man can find unity with himself and with others by recognizing a harmony beyond himself and by interaction with other beings. He cannot be himself unless he is brought into right relationship with his Creator, Sovereign and Redeemer. It is in this relationship of self with Self that man finds both his being and becoming. The self is then open to growth, change and transformation amid the unexpected and common

²H. Richard Niebuhr, *et. al.*, *The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), p. 31.

junctures of life. It contends with conflicts within and pressures without but maintains hope and faith in the God who comes in love to all who respond to him. Man's struggle with himself becomes God's opportunity to act on his behalf and to grant man the gift of renewed relationships with Him and with one another.

The behavioural disciplines contribute toward the understanding of the personal-relational model. Freud's psycho-sexual approach aids in the recognition of life-energy which is present in every normal human being and which grows or atrophies depending upon how the individual handles his inner responses. Freud points to the inevitable conflicts within man and to the mechanisms he develops in order to protect himself against the onslaughts of society.

Sullivan's interpersonal scheme advances the development of self-dynamism through interpersonal relations. Significant others determine the self that is formed because the self is a composite of "reflected appraisals." Culture helps make up the self-system through the attitudes and meanings that important people in a person's life convey to him. While these two systems represent two different poles, followers of both Freud and Sullivan have modified their positions so that the movement has been toward the maintenance of a balance between the intrapsychic and the

interpersonal.

Erikson's psycho-social structure combines the epigenetic principle with interpersonal elements. He emphasizes the psycho-social crisis, modalities, relationships and goals of the eight stages of life which covers birth to old age. Erikson believes in the dynamic interaction between the individual and society. He presents the effects and affects of genetic issues and the social milieu. For example, trust is the effect and mistrust is the affect of Stage I, Infancy. This crisis is partly psycho-physical and partly social. The infant's experiences of sucking food and receiving care gives him feelings of satisfaction about his own needs as well as the interaction with his social environment now centered on the maternal person. This "incorporative mode" introduces the infant to self-acceptance and self-giving which are established at this stage but which are put to the test in succeeding stages. The regularity of physical nourishment and the quality of relationship which he receives from his providers instill in him a sense of their trustworthiness and of his individual worth. Where the infant's experience has been that of rejection or deprivation, then mistrust of people in general and of his own self in particular arise in situations where self-offering and self-receiving are demanded. The integration of basic trust versus mistrust with other crises

in the coming stages produces the healthy functioning of the self. Erikson ascribes to religion the development of basic trust through the faith and conviction of the parents which cement the child's confidence in the trustworthiness of self and community. Erikson's monumental work adds psycho-social dimensions which encompasses all ages and all types of relationships among families and in the local churches.

III. THE FAMILY FACES ITS PERSONAL-RELATIONAL TASKS

The Filipino family is confronted with two main tasks that have been imbedded in its system but which have to be reformed in order to meet the challenges of the changing social order and the demands of the Christian faith. The first task is the nurture of the personal core of the individual. The second task is the augmentation of relational responsibilities to include the larger community.

The nurture of the personal core means that parents will have to begin changing some persisting cultural patterns that have neglected the child's personhood. Filipino parents consider the child as part of themselves and make plans and decisions for the child. Even when the child grows up, parents still have the major voices in the choice of his occupation and life partner. The child is expected to be passive and submissive to authority and to those who

are ahead of him in age and rank within the extended family. The child is to depreciate himself in order to get along with other people. He must subordinate his needs to that of others. These are some of the practices that have caused the inner conflicts of the "New Filipino" who is beginning to realize that he is not an extension of his parents. He has a responsibility to actualize his selfhood and to enable others to do so.

The widening of relational responsibilities to include the larger community means that families will have to loosen resistant kinship and ritual bonds. The Filipino family has been too tightly structured around priorities and loyalties to the nuclear family, relatives and ritual affiliates to the neglect of the community's needs and wellbeing. Obligations to larger organizations and institutions like the school, the church and the state are minimized in favor of the family's advancement. Many families use the political and economic resources of the community to gain their own selfish ends. Unless families will redirect their energies so that family resources will be used for community development, many Filipino towns and villages will remain undeveloped. Families have to learn to live responsibly in society so that the family becomes the basic unit that exists not only for its own preservation but for involvement and participation in community.

Family life is a covenant entered into by parents and children to take common cause in the world and in the service of the neighbor.

The following summary of proposed family life stages with their corresponding personal-relational tasks are offered as guidelines in shaping and pursuing the education of the Filipino family:

Beginning families: married couples through the third year of the oldest child.

1. Meeting self-other needs and establishing mutually-satisfying roles between husband and wife.
2. Establishing workable relationships with relatives, particularly of the families of the conjugal pair.
3. Establishing ways of interaction with a wider circle of friends of both spouses and associates and through community organizations.
4. Preparing for the responsibilities of parenthood.
5. Creating an atmosphere wherein the infant finds trust and security.
6. Enabling a child to experience guided autonomy in his daily activities.

Families with pre-school children: oldest child-four to six years of age.

1. Sharing the responsibility of parenting their own child.

2. Enabling a child to achieve a sense of initiative and to be a participating member of the family.

Families with school children: oldest child-- seven to twelve years old or in Elementary School.

1. Enabling the child to develop his sense of industry and creativity in the home and with neighborhood friends and schoolmates.
2. Maintaining effective communication within the expanding family and in the larger community.

Families with high school children: Oldest child-- thirteen to seventeen years old or in High School.

1. Enabling the teenager to understand himself and to develop his own life-style or identity.
2. Being open to the growing edges of a teenager's life and knowing when to exercise or withdraw authority.

Launching families: first child gone to college or married to last child leaving home.

1. Rediscovering each other as husband and wife amid the throes of the launching period.
2. Finding new meanings in interpersonal relationships and in one's work.

Families in the middle years: children have all married or are now young adults.

1. Pursuing the meaning of maturity and generating it to others.

Families in the older years: retirement to death of both spouses.

1. Coming to terms with the significance of one's life and accepting one's place in the larger scheme of things.

IV. THE CHURCH UNDERGIRDS ITS PERSONAL-RELATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Protestant Church in the Philippines today ministers to persons and families beset by grave doubts and strife from within and turbulent social and economic changes from without. The local church needs to serve all families in the total community by equipping families within its reaches for their personal-relational responsibilities. Two major approaches are considered: the first is through small person or process-oriented groups representing different stages of family life. The second is through family group therapy and counseling. Both approaches have not as yet been implemented in the local churches and are therefore subject to experimentation and adaptation.

Groups in the church provide rich opportunities for personal growth, interpersonal relationships and community action. Small groups concerned with growth and change pave the way for a deeper understanding of self-other

existence within the family context and in the different spheres of communal interaction. The group way of life characterizes Philippine living. The main Philippine occupations--fishing and farming--are done in groups. The celebration of national and religious holidays are undertaken by groups. Friendships and courtships are carried on through groups. But the church has yet to explore the possibilities of religiously oriented groups that emphasize personal sharing and depth communication. Thousands within the church hunger for the privilege to belong to groups that deal with humanness on deeper levels and grapple with the inevitable conflicts of a culture in transition and a minority religion (Protestants comprise only 3 per cent of the country's population). Every member of the church should be afforded the opportunity to belong to a small significant group wherein confrontation and encounter occurs.

Person or process centered groups representing families in different stages of life abide by some operating principles that enable them to become redemptive. These principles include: participation or the experiencing of one's presence and the presence of the others; mutual need satisfaction or self-giving and self-receiving; communication or the giving, receiving and checking out of words and feelings and interaction or the assumption of maintenance

roles which engender group identity and unity. The character of the group resides in the individuals who compose it. Therefore persons in the group have to be authentic and possess the integrity to raise questions of present relevance, risk the consequences and lead in the application of solutions.

Family group therapy and counseling are imperatives in a country where families determine the growth and direction of individuals and communities. All families have problems and most of them have to do with personality differences and interpersonal relationships. Family life is the most intimate and rewarding of all relationships and yet many families are paralyzed by pain and conflict. The church is the only institution in the philippines that has a natural entree to families and has access to the interlocking network of persons in the family. The church needs to broaden its vision of the healing ministry to include personnel and facilities for family counseling clinics.

Family group therapy or the treatment of an entire family has been the model for family group counseling. The focus shifts from the individual to the family organism whose dynamic or dysfunction may be observed in the ways members relate to its other. The over-all goal is the achievement of mutually satisfying relationships which enable individuals to grow and change. The spotlight is on

the husband and wife relationship upon which all other family relationships are formed. The "identified patient" or the one who is supposedly a problem in the family is seen as the person who overtly bears the covert pain of the family. The interpersonal balance lies in an unconscious family contract wherein one becomes delinquent or "sick" and thus becomes the scapegoat of the family's inability to function harmoniously. Family interaction or the multiple lines of communication between husband and wife, parent and child, sibling to sibling are observed. Negative-feeding cycles of deprivation and attack are interrupted and translated into positive action. Parents are quite aware that the "sins of the fathers are visited upon the children."³ In family group therapy and counseling the family is also made to see how "the sins of the children are visited on the parents."⁴ The therapist-counselor becomes a participant-observer who acts as communication-facilitator, feeling-enabler, reality-tester and above all, an instrument of nurture and reconciliation. Through family group therapy and counseling the church may contribute toward the healing of intrapsychic and

³Exodus 20:5

⁴John Elderkin Bell, *Family Group Therapy* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 49.

interpersonal illness now and in the future.

The Protestant Church in the Philippines has tremendous responsibilities in ministering to people in their basic humanity. Selfhood can only take place in transaction with other selves. The realization of man's being and becoming comes about in the interaction of one life with another within the context of a concerned community. This kind of community emanates from persons and families who are committed to God's purpose for man in the world. God is actively engaged with people who respond to his love and become partakers of the covenant-promise: "I will be your God and you will be my people."⁵ The church as the chosen community is to start where people are and there proclaim God's gifts of growth, change and renewal. God is in the process, He does not leave individuals and families alone. He is actively at work in the world, enabling each one to be recreated in Christ Jesus and to become empowered by the Holy Spirit toward vital relationship with other human beings and eternal fellowship with Him.

⁵Exodus 4:7.

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